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**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**TURKEY AND EUROPEAN UNION.  
PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

by

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June 2004

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**TURKEY AND EUROPEAN UNION.  
PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

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## **ABSTRACT**

For Turkey, Europe was the model for modernization since the era of Kemal Ataturk. Turkey's relations with Europe started with the Ankara agreement and the opening of the custom union. Since then, the country has strived for integration with the community. The Commission rejected Turkey's application in 1989 while stating for the first time that political reasons affected this decision over concerns about the Cyprus issue. The integration of new members highlighted the shift of Europe towards political considerations. Turkey was rejected again as a candidate at the Luxemburg summit. The following Helsinki summit accepted the candidacy for Turkey but now the country must comply with the political criteria. Turkey has made great progress towards integration. However, the demands imply that Turkey must make strong decisions that might contradict the country's long standing powers' politic approach. Moreover, the criteria raise security concerns in a country where security is an aspect of its psychology. The implementation of such a strong decision needs a calmer democratic environment. Turkey's further impediment results from such an absence. Thus, Turkey's real impediment is democratic deficiency. Therefore, Turkey needs a little more time to better align itself with the democratic values of the European standard before its integration, which appears possible considering the pace of reforms and the strategic weight of the country.

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. PURPOSE**

Turkey has had diplomatic relations with Europe since the era of the Ottoman Empire. Although the Ottoman Empire was included in the concept of Europe, it was never considered “European.” With the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1918, Turkey began to see Europe as a political and economic model of modernization. The initial impetus for modernization occurred in the wake of the creation of the Turkish Republic by Kemal Attaturk in 1923. The struggle toward Europeanization was advanced with Turkey’s entry into NATO after World War II. During the Cold War, Turkey’s strategic importance determined the country’s relationship with the European Community. However, the end of the Cold War changed that relationship in Europe.

After WWII, with the Truman Doctrine, the United States increased its commitment to Turkey as part of the American containment policy. The above relationship marked the cooperation of the country with the United States and its western orientation. As a result, Turkey joined NATO in 1952. Aspirations for becoming a European member began to be fulfilled with the Ankara Agreement. The agreement was signed on 12 September 1963 and went into effect on 1 December 1964. The cornerstone of this agreement was the establishment of a custom union in three stages.

An additional protocol was signed on 23 November 1970 and went into effect on 1 January 1973. The protocol established a timetable of technical measures to be done to accomplish the objectives of the customs union within a period of 22 years. The European Parliament finally approved the customs union on December 1995 after strong U.S. support.<sup>1</sup>

After the invasion of Cyprus in 1974 and the coup of 1980, Turkey’s relation with Europe deteriorated. Following the coup and free elections under Ozal’s governorship, Turkey entered a period of economic liberalization marked by improvement to its

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<sup>1</sup> See Katherine A. Wilkens, “Turkey Today: Troubled Ally’s Search for Identity,” p. 19.

economy. Turkey, in 1987, applied for membership to the European Community. The Commission, however, rejected Turkey's application in December 1989 citing both economic and political reasons as justification for its decision.

Europe was transformed as an entity and became the European Union (EU). The accession of new members was concluded at the Copenhagen summit. The decision of the summit was that every member becoming a member of the union had to comply with certain economic and political criteria.<sup>2</sup> It also appears that the entry of new members was not a question of if, but how they would become a member.

The last enlargement of EU took place taking into consideration the Copenhagen Criteria. The Luxemburg summit accepted the eligibility of other countries for membership, and among these was Cyprus, but it rejected Turkey's candidacy<sup>3</sup>. Instead, it decided to draft a strategy to prepare Turkey for accession by bringing the country closer to the standards of the EU, confirming at the same time at the highest level, Turkey's eligibility for accession to the EU. The council also decided that it would determine Turkey's fate using the same criteria as for the other applicant countries.<sup>4</sup> The rejection was a great disappointment to Turkey and worsened the situation and its stance towards the EU.

Therefore, it appears that with the end of the Cold War, economic and political issues now dominate strategic concerns. This shift in EU priorities raised questions about Turkey's candidacy for membership as well as where Turkey actually belongs.

On the one hand, Europe changed its membership criteria. The integration of new members highlighted a clear shift toward political considerations. On the other hand, Turkey did not recognize this shift and strived mainly for economic measures such as abandoning the import substitution strategy, and opening its economy. However, the Luxemburg Summit rejected Turkey's candidacy mainly for political reasons. The EU

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<sup>2</sup> See European Council in Copenhagen, 21-22 June 1993, Conclusions of the Presidency, Par 7.

<sup>3</sup> See Luxemburg European Council Press Release: Luxembourg, 12 December 1997, par 27 and par 31.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., par 31.

accepted finally Turkey as a candidate state at the Helsinki summit in December 1999. Turkey now could become a member with the same criteria applied to the other candidate states.<sup>5</sup>

Turkey's candidacy is a significant development, but it does not dispel all doubts about the country's political orientation. Turkey now has the opportunity to become a member if it is able to meet the membership criteria. Therefore, the Helsinki decisions sharpened the questions of how the Turks view their future and how compatible Turkey's current and long term activist approach is with the postmodern international environment in the West. Could Turkey become a member of the EU? This paper is an effort to uncover the problems that lie ahead for Turkey's membership. The most problematic aspect for Turkey is the political criteria. The thesis will propose the political reforms that the country must implement. It analyzes the problems and concerns that might complicate this procedure both in the domestic and international environments.

## **B. IMPORTANCE**

Turkey's acceptance by the EU as a candidate member at the 1999 Helsinki Summit improved its relationship with Europe. However, the implications of membership would entail important changes in Turkey's internal and external policy and a more astute social policy. The same reason entails Turkey's acceptance of a detailed examination of its policies by the EU. This acceptance implies an opening of its internal political practices to an unprecedented degree. Political and military elites will have to accept a less prominent role. However, the success of the country's entry into the EU is very important since it implies a clear way out of Turkey's economic and political crisis.

Turkey's failure to enter the EU could also result in the country's isolation from Europe. This isolation, in turn, could trigger a shift toward the East and unwillingness to cooperate with Western powers. A Turkish oriented non-Western approach could result in a more unpredictable Turkey in its foreign policy intentions and practices.<sup>6</sup>

Turkey has been on the verge of war with Greece three times during the past few years. Turkey's membership and its political implications could be a crucial factor in the

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<sup>5</sup> See Presidency Conclusions Helsinki European Council, 10 and 11 December 1999, par 12.

<sup>6</sup> See Ian O. Lesser, "Turkey, Greece, and the U.S. in a Changing Strategy Environment: Testimony before the House International Relations Committee Subcommittee on Europe," p. 3.

preservation of stability and peace in South East Europe and in the region around the Aegean Sea. Turkey's progress in the EU is, therefore, of great importance for specialists in international security, strategic planning and must be taken into account by policymakers and defense planning personnel.

### **C. MAJOR ARGUMENTS**

This paper answers the following question. Is Turkey qualified to enter the EU?

This question is answered by addressing the following related questions? Could Turkey accept policy changes at both the domestic and international levels to accommodate the EU directives.? What will be the military's reaction? Could it accept a less prominent role? What are the implications of Islamic revivalism? Will it threaten the European orientation of the country? Could it generate a shift away from the country's Western orientation?

Finally, how does international policy affect Turkey? What are the security concerns that might create problems.? How do they create problems for human and minority rights? How could all these affect Turkey's candidacy?

Turkey's candidacy is of great importance both for the country and for the West. There are many requirements now that Turkey must meet in order to enter the EU. Turkey's economic situation is very significant and many steps have to be taken, but, with the help of the EU and foreign aid, Turkey might be able to meet these criteria. The path of the custom unions demonstrates that Turkey will be able to overcome the economic aspect. However, the political implications of its candidacy constitute a major problem. The criteria of the EU now threaten the prerogatives of the political elites in the country. Security issues also complicate the effort since the implications of candidacy may threaten the territorial integrity of the country. The members of the EU, such as Greece and Cyprus, may threaten the prospects of Turkey's membership if they do not see clear evidence of Turkey's goodwill regarding their security.

Turkey's candidacy has a long road ahead. First, the political elites whose interests are threatened by the implications of candidacy must accept some reduction in their power. In order to do so, they must be convinced that there are no significant

dangers that will threaten the security of the country. In this effort, both the EU and the United States could be a crucial factor since they can provide guarantees for this security.

The recent U.S. operation in Iraq is also a significant factor. If the United States succeeds in consolidating a peaceful and western-oriented democracy in Iraq, an important threat to Turkey can be removed. Security will be a determinant factor for the country in order to implement significant reforms regarding human rights and minority rights. Minority rights especially will be a major concern for Turkey since they involve the Kurds.

Turkey's accession is very important. It can provide the paradigm that Islam and democracy are compatible. Turkey can also improve the image of Europe since it can highlight how it is possible to prove that an institution is crucial for the improvement of the world by simply providing the right incentives.

Turkey in the EU and the implications of accession could be a crucial stabilizing factor since it could relieve the tension in South East Europe, where in many cases, the dispute between Greece and Turkey has endangered the cohesion of NATO, and most importantly, has been a source of possible conflict. Therefore, Turkey's accession seems very significant. Thus, the United States and the EU's assistance will be important for the country in order to achieve its aspirations

#### **D. METHODOLOGY**

The thesis primarily employs a case study to examine the political and international implications of Turkey's candidacy for membership in the EU. The first case discusses the implications of Islam in the country, and mainly political Islam. The second case suggests that Turkey must transform its domestic politics. The third case explores how security issues complicate efforts for reforms concerning human and minority rights. Finally, the fourth case examines how the international environment and relations with neighboring countries raise security concerns for Turkey and might complicate its accession.

#### **E. CHAPTER BY CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This paper will be organized into six chapters. The historical links with Turkey and Europe, and the purpose of the thesis, are the main focus of the introduction.

Turkey's orientation appears to be threatened by the revival of political Islam in the country. Since there was an effort to shift orientations and cooperation with other Islamic countries, and attempts at reconciliation and inquiries into the benefits of western orientation, the rise of political Islam created concerns about the orientation of the country, and subsequently, its EU aspirations. Therefore, Chapter II explores the potential and the consequences of political Islam and tries to assess its implication for EU aspirations specifically.

Chapter III highlights the domestic problems posed by EU candidacy. The military elite created the first government in Modern Turkey. Since then, the military continued to determine the political path of the country. Modern Turkey has to provide 23 free elections. However, few believe that the country has a true democracy. The political criteria entail a truly democratic government. An impediment to this is the status of the military, and specifically, civil military relations. Thus, the chapter explores the potentiality of the military elite in Turkey. The military continues to be strong, and therefore, any effort towards alignment with the European standard could be fruitless. Could the military stance prove a real impediment to accession? Will the military elite accept a lesser role in political matters, as the EU wants? These will be the concerns of this chapter.

Chapter IV explores the country's considerable domestic security concerns. It discusses the problems that primarily derive from the implications of EU succession. Thus, it includes an account of human rights and minority rights, and the progress made towards accession. Since minority rights in Turkey's case are very complicated because of the Kurdish issue, the chapters highlights the implications of the Kurds and estimates the difficulties for Turkey to implement complete reforms taking in account the country's security issues and the political conditions.

Chapter V explores the international security concept that might create problems for Turkey. An impediment for Turkey's aspirations has been the relationship and the dispute with Greece. The EU decision concerning Turkey in some cases in the past has been blocked by Greece's veto power. Their relations worsened with the invasion in Cyprus in 1974. The Helsinki summit also called on the candidate countries to resolve

any border disputes before accession. Thus, Turkey has to agree to a viable solution concerning its borders. Since the past is characterized by mutual animosity, Greece's stance and the stance of Cyprus after its membership could create great impediments to Turkey's accession. Could this dispute endanger the prospects of Turkey? What will be Greece's stance? This chapter answers these questions.

The final chapter concludes that Turkey is highly motivated and has made a great deal of progress. Turkey might not succeed in meeting the date for the negotiations for accession at the end of 2004. However, it is closer than ever. This effort will likely materialize in the near future since Turkey has taken its efforts seriously.

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## **II. THE RISE OF ISLAM IN TURKEY: APPLYING SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY**

Turkey has been a secular state since the era of Kemal Attaurk. However, the great transformation which happened under the leadership of Kemal and the efforts toward Europeanization and Westernization of the country was not a simple process. During that process, the crucial role of religion in the Ottoman empire and the legacy that carried through to the creation of Turkey's republic must not be forgotten. Modern Turkey's secularization course might be described as the state's control of religion and not its complete elimination from the political realm.

Therefore, religion in Turkey was always an important factor for the success of political parties and was used both by the state and its political adversaries. Although the concept of religion was important from the outset, a rise in political Islam in the post-1980 era occurred to an exceptional degree. This increase actually happened with the success of political parties that mainly used the concept of religion as the central aspect of their political message. Thus, a clear depiction of Islam derives from the electoral performance first of the Welfare Party (RP), later of the Virtue Party (FP) and finally of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) which won the elections of 4 November 2002.

The religious aspect was not only a problem for the country but was also a concern for the European members which raised some questions about the final outcome for the country's integration into the European Union (EU). The former Dutch Foreign Minister, Hans van Mierlo, for example, said "There is a problem of a large Muslim state. Do we want that in Europe? It is an unspoken question."<sup>7</sup> Moreover, and which might be the most important issue, is that the Islamic Political movement in Turkey created great concerns and ambiguities regarding its own intentions, and its dynamic in Turkish policy. It appeared, thus, as a threat that could lead the country on a path different from the long standing secular and western oriented approach. As such, the movement was continuously under suspicion and under the strong eye of the state elite.

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<sup>7</sup> F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," p. 60.

Actually, the movement in some cases showed an Eastern inclination and efforts at cooperation and orientation towards other Muslim countries have been attempted. Simultaneously, a rhetoric against western ideas and institutions have been cultivated. This stance raised inquiries about the power of the movement to assert a different role in Turkey's foreign policy and to create impediments to each accession to the EU.

The main purpose of this chapter is to explain the rise of political Islam in Turkey. In doing so, the investigation will try to assert if there are inherent dynamics that could lead to a different orientation for the country and thus jeopardize EU prospects. Therefore, this paper starts with a description of the electoral path of the Islamic movement in Turkey after the 1960's. It continues with an analysis of opportunities in the political realm provided to the movement and accounts for its enhancement. Next, an investigation of the leadership's responses and the messages that help to sustain the movement follows. The next section provides the resources and the methods used by the Islamic movement to preach its message and how it appealed to the constituency. The final section presents the conclusions as well as an assessment of the success of the political movement and its implications for the western orientation of the country, and mainly, for its EU prospects.

#### **A. THE ELECTORAL PATH**

The RP and FP are actually descendents of the National Outlook Movement which was started by a group of protesters within the centre right Justice Party (AP). The product of this movement was the creation of the National Order Party (MNP) in 1969 and its ideological framework and its successor is known as the National Outlook. The parties advocating this framework were banned by military intervention and were introduced later with a different name.

The MNP was proscribed by the military intervention of 1971, and shortly thereafter, it reappeared as the National Salvation Party (MSP). It remained on the political scene for eight years until it was banned by the military coup in 1980 along with the other parties. It reappeared as the Welfare Party (RP) in 1983 under the same MSP leadership. The RP was shut down again in 1997 by another military intervention and reappeared as the Virtue Party (FP).

The significance of these parties in the political life of their era was not equally distributed. Actually there is an increase in the appeal of the Islamic oriented parties mainly after the 1980's which raises questions about the causes of their future success. The second incarnation of the movement, the MSP, gained 11.8% of the popular votes and 10.6% of the seats in the Parliament in 1973's national elections. In the following 1977 elections, it received only 8.5% of the votes and 5.5% of the seats in the Parliament. The party was supported mainly by religious sects and its declining performance in the second electoral cycle actually happened because one of these sects withdrew its support from the party. It is also important to note that during this earlier period, the main support for the party was found in the underdeveloped rural areas of the country.<sup>8</sup>

The same insignificant performance characterized the political path of its successor, the Welfare Party after 1983. However, an important difference appeared during the 1991 national elections. The party succeeded in increasing its constituencies from 7.16% in the previous 1987's national elections to the very high and unprecedented degree of 16.88%. The performance of the party continued to increase and gained 21.38 % in the following 1995 national elections having been declared the winner of 1994 municipal elections before that. Finally, the party was banned by the Constitutional Criminal Court in 1997 and reappeared in the 1999 election as the Virtue Party and gained 15.41% of the votes. The forth incarnation of the MSP, the Justice and Development Party (AKP), emerged after the Virtue Party was banned. The party was the undisputable winner of the 2002 elections gaining 34.28% of the votes and 363 of the seats in the Parliament.<sup>9</sup>

## **B. OPPORTUNITIES IN THE POLITICAL, DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL CONCEPT**

The rise of political Islam is a phenomenon that deserves special treatment and creates concern and inquires about its dynamics and emergence. Several different opinions are trying to shed light on the revivalism of Islam in a country with a strong secular past characterized, in many cases, by military intervention in state politics. The

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<sup>8</sup> N. Balkan and S. Savran, "The Politics of Permanent Crisis. Class, Ideology and State in Turkey," p. 111.

<sup>9</sup> See [http://www.ifes.org/eguide/resultsum/turkey\\_par02RES.htm](http://www.ifes.org/eguide/resultsum/turkey_par02RES.htm), accessed 12 February 2004.

aforementioned increasing path of the parties representing political Islam in Turkey can be investigated by first exploring the occasions in the political realm that helped lead to the establishment of the movement.

### **C. THE EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION**

One of the main factors that helped the rise of Islam in Turkey was the globalization and its effects on the economy. “The paradox of neoliberal globalization is that it unifies and integrates while it fragments and marginalizes.”<sup>10</sup> While it is very successful in financial aspects, its progress concerning labor mobility lags far behind. Neoliberal globalization actually creates large opportunities for small groups of highly skilled employees but the vast majority of labor remains restricted and confined to small incomes and job perspectives. It is exactly these people who turn their attention to the state authorities and leadership for help. On the other hand,, globalization processes further exacerbated the problem. It is exactly the idea of globalization which places many limitations on the state’s protectionist measures and interventionist policies. Under these circumstances, states proved inefficient in protecting the rights of their constituencies, who were mainly the losers in the globalizations processes, and as a consequence, resentment runs high. As a result, people turn to more fundamentalist or nationalist movements which threaten the democratization processes in some cases. Thus, identity politics based on race, religion, or ethnic identity and supported by these large groups of losers appear whose purpose is to protect their interests.<sup>11</sup>

Hence, these explanations do not support only the emergence and rise of fundamentalism, but in addition, the appeal and increase of other forms of identity politics such as the far right or nationalism politics. Similar patterns in the rise of these groups in Western Europe and Latin America in the form of the far right for the former and nationalism for the latter, is a clear indication of the effect of globalization.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Journal of International Affairs, Ziya Onis, “Neoliberal Globalization and the Democracy Paradox: The Turkish General Elections of 1999,” Fall 2000, 54, no. 1, p. 284.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 287.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

In the specific context of Turkey's society, the effect of globalization followed by other factors discussed later, resulted in the emergence, and actually, the rise of both the Islamic and nationalist movement as expressed in the success of their representative political parties.

The path of Islam's rise in Turkey shows a small electoral performance during the 1980's and some evidence, although not accurate enough, suggests that the main supporters of the Islamic parties emanated from the poor and uneducated segment of the population.<sup>13</sup> During the 1990's, there is a clear increase in the electoral performance which started with the 1991 elections and reached peak levels in 1995 when the main representative of Islamic politics, the RP, was declared the first party.

However, it is not only a movement of the poor. It also includes people who have benefited from the globalization processes but remained outside of the political elite. It is important for these groups to acquire political power using the resources of the economic power they possessed and which increased through the opportunities of the liberalization of the economy.

A shift from the domination of material to financial capital is also an effect of globalization which undermined the past logic of a regulating economy. The shift was marked by the decreasing role of the state in economic life as well as the decline of the importance and influence of the labor unions. The combination of these led to the formation of informal networks characterized by social relations and reciprocity.<sup>14</sup> The above result was not, of course, unique to Turkey's situation. Similar patterns of "network" solutions have emerged in other Muslim countries as a protectionist mechanism for the poor and deprived, but also among those dominating the financial and political stage with Egypt being a prominent case.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> N. Balkan and S. Savran, "The Politics of Permanent Crisis. Class, Ideology and State in Turkey," p. 111.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> For a detailed discuss about networks in Egypt see Singerman, Diane "Avenues of Participation: Family, Politics, and Networks in Urban Quarter of Cairo," Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995, pp. 132-172.

It was the combination of the decline of the state protection mechanisms and the appearance of these reciprocity networks that highlighted the importance of religion. Religion actually provided both the space and the ideological concept for the creation of these networks, which to an extent, appear as the protector of the poor. However, the creation of these networks was not limited only to the protection of the marginalized and desperate segment of the population, but they appeared also as means of cooperation and exchange of technology and information among strong entrepreneurs under the same ideological framework. One of them, the most prominent and a decisive supporter of political Islam in Turkey, was the Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (MUSIAD) to be described later.

It will not be safe, however due to the aforementioned issues, to characterize the Islamic political movement as the political outlet of the poor and marginalized segment of the population since they are actually those who carried the burden of the globalization processes. Globalization as stated previously, created opportunities for others to both emerge with and increase their economic power. Those who actually benefited and gained power in economic terms remained outside of the political elite of the country. It is the combination of these two groups of Turkey's society that created the base upon which the Islamic political movement took its initial impetus. Thus, it is a cross class coalition that characterizes the organizational structure of the movement that actually unifies two groups excluded from the globalization processes in a different sense: the poor and the rich excluded from the political elite.<sup>16</sup>

#### **D. MILITARY INTERVENTION**

The role of globalization was not the sole factor that determined the rise of the Islamic political movement in Turkey. Additional dynamics contributed to this as well. One of them was, of course, the role of the state and mainly the military position toward the Islamic issue. It is important to keep in mind, that notwithstanding the secular past of Turkey's politics, the issue of religion was never neglected in state policies. Not only

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<sup>16</sup> Third World Quarterly, Ziya Onis, "The Political Economy of Islamic Resurgence in Turkey: The Rise of the Welfare Party in Perspective," December 1997, Vol. 18, Issue 4, p. 273, pp. 6-8.

because of this issue, but in many cases, religion was used both to legitimize current regimes and to support policy decisions, or nationalism and identity orientations of the country.

A clear change toward Islam took place mainly after the military coup in 1980. Until then, Islam remained subservient to the secular standards. However, a clear tolerance of Islamic elements in the political realm appeared afterwards. According to the new posture toward Islamic issues, the state constitutionally declared religious education mandatory in both primary and secondary schools. Sufi tarikats, banned in 1925, appeared strong again and their members penetrated many ranks of political society.<sup>17</sup>

The aforementioned policy toward Islam was not of course out of the question. It came actually as an effort to stabilize policy decisions by the regimes. The leader of the military regime, General Kenan Evren, during the 1980 coup, used Islam to rationalize and legitimize his intention to turn the political system of the country to more authoritarian principles.<sup>18</sup> Following the state provision for religious education, Evren announced that “Secularism does not mean depriving Turkish citizens of religious instruction and exposing them to exploiter of religion.”<sup>19</sup>

Except for handling Islam as a means of consolidating and legitimizing its authoritarian rule, the military regime supported Islam for another important reason. The military has been the representative and vanguard of Turkey’s secular politics. It was the bad situation of the 1970’s that mad the military elites turn their attention to Islam and used it as a stabilizing force for the domestic social and political issues. A crucial factor in this decision is their effort to counterweight all the destabilizing forces and mainly the opposition of the left.

Backing Islam for counter-weighting the left it is not, of course, something new in the course of Middle Eastern politics. A similar pattern of the above tactic can be found in Egypt when Sadat revived the Muslim Brotherhood in order to counterweight the left,

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<sup>17</sup> International Journal of Middle East Studies. Vol. 28, No. 2, Umit Cizre Sakalliolglou, “Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey,” p. 244.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

in Lebanon, where the same reason also contributed to the emergence of Hezbollah, and in Palestine where Israel supported the rise of Islam, although not to counterweight the left but mainly the power of the PLO.

In this effort, Turkey increased the power of the Directorate of Religious Affairs and actually increased its resources as well. The above policy exploited the vast resources that led to the creation and propagation of religious schools throughout the country. As a result, these same schools appeared as the main supporters of the welfare party in the following years.<sup>20</sup>

#### **E. PARTY FRAGMENTATION**

Military intervention proved to be a crucial factor for Islamic revivalism for another important reason which also made the rise of the Islamic movement possible. This reason was the shutting down of the major political parties and the banning of their political leaders before 1980. Prominent political figures remained outside the political scene whose goal for the military was to start anew by severing the affiliations from the instability of the past.

According to the military beliefs, the previous instability was a product of the fragmentation of the party system. What the military actually wanted was a two party system able to support the reforms which were necessary for the country to exit its economic and political crises. However, notwithstanding the intentions, the above military measures proved fruitless. Moreover, following the transition to democracy, the referendum of September 1987 abolished the banning of key politicians.

The new reality dawned with the return of the old and strong political figures in Turkey's policy matters. Their return also happened in a manner that exacerbated the political scene in Turkey. Instead of returning to their previous parties, these politicians created the new political parties which were under their direct control. Thus, a further fragmentation of political parties occurred instead of them being limited which was supposed to be the goal of the military measures. It is important to note that during this process, parties with a similar ideological context and the only difference being the leadership also appeared.

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<sup>20</sup> Third World Quarterly. Ziya Onis, "The Political Economy of Islamic Resurgence in Turkey: The Rise of the Welfare Party in Perspective," December 1997, Vol. 18, Issue 4, pp. 9 and 273.

It is exactly these above processes that weakened the power of the established parties and provided the opportunities to identity the parties (nationalism, Islamism) to flourish and increase their ideological performance.

#### **F. ELECTORAL SYSTEM KURDISH BANNING**

The banning of the political parties was not the only measure taken away from the military elite in order to avoid fragmentation and help create strong governments. The elite also introduced a 10% national threshold for the parties in order to participate in the formation of the government.

Despite this extremely high threshold, the results of the municipal elections of 1989 showed a high level of fragmentation and instability. No matter the real purpose for the imposition of the above threshold, the final beneficiaries were the parties of identity politics, and mainly the Welfare Party, as the representatives of the Islamic movement of the era.

The success of the Welfare Party came from the support of people with social backgrounds whose party could not reach that threshold. Additionally, the support of the Kurds also contributed further to the electoral performance of the Welfare Party. Particularly in the 1994 elections, the party increased its constituencies in the Kurdish regions. The Kurdish Democratic Party withdrew from the elections and their supporters turned their votes to the Welfare Party not as a favor, but mainly as an expression of hostility to the other political parties and because it was closer to their social beliefs.<sup>21</sup>

#### **G. EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP**

The opportunities described above proved crucial for the emergence of the Islamic political movement as a dominant actor in Turkish politics. However, this success could no be achieved without an effective leadership. The electoral path of political Islam is mainly an attribution of a man who was the leader of all the parties that represented the political expression of Islam until the final elections of 2002 with the AKP: the Necmettin Erbakan.

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<sup>21</sup> See Jillian Schwedler “Islamic Identity: Myth, Menace or Mobilizer?” pp. 7-8. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2. See also Umit Cizre Sakallioğlu “Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey”, p. 248.

The Necmettin Erbakan created MSP after the banning of MNP via military intervention. Both parties were ideologically situated to the National Outlook movement. Small and medium enterprises were given importance in their political discourse. The businessmen and owners of these enterprises have been discriminatorily excluded from the Union of Chambers dominated by the interests of large companies. The administration of the organization was usually determined by the will of the government. Nonetheless, Erbakan succeeded in winning the elections for the administration mobilizing the owners of these small and medium companies. The government did not recognize his election and replaced him immediately thereafter, but this experience proved crucial for his success. The governmental discrimination faced by medium and small companies was one of the main slogans of his electoral campaigns.<sup>22</sup>

During the tenure of the three coalition governments in which his MSP was a partnership, Erbakan tried to control the Ministry of Industry and Technology. Using the power that the Ministry provided to him, he strived to expand the control of the state over the public state firms which led its party to oppose the partners in the coalition governments. However, MSP's efforts to use public funds in order to cultivate patron client relations with its constituency is apparently the real reason behind the disagreement. Thus, the collapse of the coalition was primarily the effort of the MSP to gain in political matters at the expense of its partners.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, during its tenure, the party preached the strategic orientation of the country and the cultivation of strong relationships with Muslim countries.

In the 1990's as a leader of RP since the MSP was banned and closed, Erbakan continuously declared the linkage between the RP and the MSP and the big contribution of MSP to the development of heavy industry in Turkey. The party, taking into account the expansion of economic liberalism, continues to push for relations with Muslim countries but this time inside the framework of the necessity for economic relations and trade. The change towards the control of the public sector is important as well. The party

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<sup>22</sup> N. Balkan and S. Savran, "The Politics of Permanent Crisis. Class, Ideology and State in Turkey," pp. 121-122.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 123.

appears to support privatization, however, it remains sensitive to the conditions of privatization such as being against the sale of companies to foreigners and having concerns about the fate of the employees after the privatization process.<sup>24</sup>

The economic liberalization as, stated previously, enhanced the economic power of the small and medium enterprises which accommodated the new reality of consumption and wealth that brought about the reforms of the Ozal. The egalitarian message of the party which was successful during the year that MNP and MSP were on the political scene could not continue its appeal in an environment with such obvious and strong income inequality. Islamic references were now used in such a careful way as to attract both the losers of the economic liberalization without excluding those who had gained from the same procedures.<sup>25</sup> Thus, the organization now turned its attention to justice instead of equality as the primary social aim.

Important also is the position of the Islamic political party toward the foreign policy issues. The leadership was and continued to be against the integration with the European Union (EU). In line with the policy of the MNP and MSP, the official position of the RP declared the integration with the EU as a part of a conspiracy whose goals was to make Turkey a province of Greater Israel.<sup>26</sup> However, with the formation of the RP-led coalition government with Tansu Ciller's DYP, the party remained agreed to the commitment of the government to follow the pro-European policy. Moreover, the party appeared far less prone to express its previous views.

The party, following the general mood which was in favor of integration with the EU also changed its formal mindset which was against the integration. The decision might have resulted from the effort to avoid the continuous banning by state authorities, and more specifically, by the military elite. However, it seems to be a supporter of integration and adjusted this position asserting that Europe will guarantee the free expression of religion and its political ambitions.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Journal of International Affairs, Ziya Onis, "Neoliberal Globalization and the Democracy Paradox: The Turkish General Elections of 1999," Fall 2000, 54, No. 1, pp. 303-304.

<sup>25</sup> N. Balkan and S. Savran, "The Politics of Permanent Crisis. Class, Ideology and State in Turkey," p. 125.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>27</sup> F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," p. 62.

The final incarnation of Islamic politics, the AKP party, which won the final 2002 elections with an impressive 34.28% of the votes, seems to adopt the same policy toward the EU. Under the leadership of Tayyip Erdogan, it proclaimed itself pro-Europe while it has denied that Islam is central to its platform.<sup>28</sup>

## **H. RESOURCES**

One of the most important aspects of the success of a movement is the resources it possesses. In the case of the Islamic revival in Turkey, the resources came because of the successful policy of the organization along with the help of external factors.

In the contemporary context of Turkey, religious sects acquired significant economic power. In addition, certain business association were created to represent Muslim businessmen. The MUSIAD (the Association of Independent Industrialists and Businessmen) is prominent and seems to operate by exploiting the networks that Islam as a religion provides. The Islamic business represents a major financial base for the Islamic party.<sup>29</sup>

During the 1980's, with the economic reforms of Ozal's government, the economic power of these Islamic businesses greatly increased. The creation of the MUSIAD is a recent phenomenon. The organization was founded in 1991 and asserts itself as a largely voluntary business association with more than 3,000 members. The Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (TUSIAD) is the other important association that represents the heavy industries of the country with about 400 members. What actually could characterize the political orientation of the business associations is that TUSIAD appeared as the supporter of the secular state while MUSIAD supports political Islam.

One of the main element of MUSIAD's agenda was the references to the exclusion of Muslim's Business from the support of the state. The message of social disadvantage and the campaign of Erbakan's political party since his unlucky

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<sup>28</sup> See <http://www.time.com/time/europe/magazine/2002/1111/turkey/konya.html>, accessed 20 November 2003.

<sup>29</sup> Third World Quarterly, Ziya Onis, "The Political Economy of Islamic Resurgence in Turkey: The Rise of the Welfare Party in Perspective," December 1997, Vol. 18, Issue 4, p. 273, pp. 6-8.

commitment to the Union of Chambers proved a strong link between the organization and the Islamic movement. In fact, the expectations were to become the beneficiaries of a government of a similar Islamic identity.

The different political orientation between the two strong business associations highlights an adversary in policy matters that might be based on a struggle for their economic interests. However, the diverse interest between MUSIAD and TUSIAD are nonetheless united on the desire to decrease the role of the state.<sup>30</sup>

Except for the contribution of the MUSIAD, other resources proved decisive in the success of the Islamic Party. One of the main contributors were the workers in Germany. Their finances proved important both for the party but also for the economic businesses conducted by the MUSIAD. Some companies relied on trust relations inside Islamic networks and invested the money from the workers and thus produced profits for both without, however, any legal protection.

Finally, along with these contributions, the economic help of Saudi Arabia provided further resources for the Islamic movement. Saudi capital arrived in the country in order to exploit the economic opportunities of the economic liberalization or to help Islamic revivalism directly.<sup>31</sup>

## **I. ISLAMIC MOBILIZATION**

A common explanation for the rise of the Islamic political movement in Muslim countries lies in the fact that Muslim states are governed by some kind of authoritarian regimes which dominate public affairs. In such an environment, direct opposition is not allowed and people resort to being unaffected by the state and in some cases, the private or semi-private institution in order to mobilize their constituencies. In most cases, the dominant institution that provides mobilizing opportunities for a movement is the mosques since the state cannot challenge them directly.

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<sup>30</sup> F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," p. 23.

<sup>31</sup> For references to the Saudi help, see Andrew Mango: "Turkey the Challenge of a New Role," pp. 77-85 The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C. Third World Quarterly December 1997, Vol. 18, Issue 4, p. 273, Ziya Onis, "The Political Economy of Islamic Resurgence in Turkey: The Rise of the Welfare Party in Perspective", p. 18, See also International Journal of Middle East Studies. Vol. 28 No. 2 Umit Cizre Sakalliglou "Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey," p. 244.

In the specific context of Turkey's politics, authoritarian regimes might be irrelevant. However, mosques here proved a crucial factor for the cultivation of the Islamic movement. Moreover, the country's politics faced military intervention in many cases after World War II. During the military governorship, mosques were important and unaffected mobilizing structures would provide venues for organizing political opposition since the military regime prohibited direct opposition. Organizing political movements inside or relied upon religious institutions would, as a result, lead the political movement toward Islamic values.

In addition to these more explicitly religious-based institutions, the Islamist movement in Turkey relied upon other social service institutions, mainly in the educational realm. The importance of these institutions resulted from the military regime's policy in the 1980's. The support of religious education and its imposition as mandatory in primary and secondary schools, in combination with the increase of the budget to religious oriented projects, led to the creation and propagation of religious schools during this period. These religious schools were later the driving and supporting force for the religious oriented politics.

Furthermore, the message of political Islam and its appeal became possible through the use of the media mainly after the 1980 coup. The liberalization processes of Ozal's government and the relative support of moderate Islam by the state elite during this era paved the way for the emergence of a powerful mainstream Islamic media. Expanding during the following years, the Islamic media by 1994 totaled 19 television stations and 45 radios.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, this media enabled the emergence of Islamic Intellectuals who found a way to reach a large pool of people and preach the new Islamic ideas.

Finally, the informal networks created in Turkey's society mainly after the liberalization of economy following Ozal's government economic reforms proved effective for the mobilization of political Islam. Social inequalities followed these reformations supported by the effect of globalization as described previously, and caused people to create their informal networks to ensure their survival or to support their

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<sup>32</sup> For a thorough description about Gullen movement see M. Hakan Yavuz, "Islamic Political Identity in Turkey," p. 104.

interests. A combination of the losers and the beneficiaries but excluding the political elite from this reformation process, found a common ideological framework based upon religious identity. The result was the creation of both informal networks and formal and strong ones such as the MUSIAD, which interact and cooperate for the interests of all in the name of common Islamic values. The economic interaction between MUSIAD and workers in Germany is a strong example of how these networks interfere and go beyond their own interests, and thus, provide the mobilizing structures and increase forces for the Islamic movement.

## **J. CONCLUSIONS**

The above analysis is an effort to describe and provide explanations for the rise of political Islam in Turkey. Some important conclusions come to light following the data presented in this essay.

It can be concluded from this analysis that the Islamic context was always included in Turkey's politics and that it will be difficult to delete an Islamic past which dominated the Ottoman Empire for centuries. However, the electoral path of the Islamic political embodiment shows a clear increase after the 1980's. This success was not, of course, just a matter of coincidence but rather it was the product of changes in both the domestic and international environment.

A close investigation deduces that the Islamic revival in Turkey came as a result of opportunities provided to the movement. The first is the effect of globalization. The globalization processes created an environment of income inequalities. The result was the creation of two groups of people who remained excluded from the process and whose very existence was threatened by the processes, and those who were the beneficiaries and improved their economic power but remained excluded from the political elite. The Islamic movement came to combine and unite these groups under a common religious-based political identity.

The second factor contributing to the rise of Islam was military intervention. The military sought to legitimize its rule backed by Islamic values and expanded them in the

state machine. These actions included an increased budget for religious affairs and the expansion of religious schools that later transformed into sources for the expansion of political Islam.

The third and relevant to military decisions was the imposition of a high electoral threshold of 10%. The above decision actually left many small parties removed from the political scene who turned their support to the Islamic party with very similar social ideas or which was, at least, less hostile to their political beliefs. Ziya Onis asserts that the threshold imposed by the military in order to avoid party fragmentation seems an impediment to the strong reforms that must be taken in Turkey.<sup>33</sup> However, the threshold might be an effort to keep outside the Kurdish political party (HADEP) from Parliament of which the members account for approximately less than 10% of the total votes. Moreover, the threshold not only failed to terminate party fragmentation but the political realm appeared more fragmented after that. It is also important to note that the electoral system using the threshold results in an unequal representation since the majority of the political parties remains outside of Parliament and did not pass the threshold. An example is that during the last elections, only two parties surpassed the 10% threshold: the AKP with 34.28 % and the Republican People's Party (CHP) with 19.40%. Thus, after the previous elections, 53.68% of the constituency won 100% of the seats while the remaining 46.32% do not have any representation whatsoever.

These aforementioned issues, of course, raise questions about the real intentions of the military elite. Taking in account the frequent military interventions after WWII, it is possible to feel that the only beneficiary of the threshold is the military. The idea of a coup against the government, while at the same time almost half of the population remains without representation, is much easier than the case where the entire population is represented by the government is not without justice when inferring that only until now what this threshold supports is the strategic interests of the military elite.

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<sup>33</sup> See Third World Quarterly, Ziya Onis, "The Political Economy of Islamic Resurgence in Turkey: The Rise of the Welfare Party in Perspective," December 1997, Vol. 18, Issue 4, p. 273, p. 10.

No matter the intentions of the military, the continuing issue that their interventions either is to counterweight the left, or to stabilize the political life proved crucial for the revival of political Islam since they provided strong political opportunities. However, the success of the Islamic movement was not a product of opportunities alone. Effective mobilization accounts as well for the expansion of political Islam.

Mobilization and recruitment, in this case, as with the entire Middle East resulted from the religious institutions. Moreover, the crucial factor here proved to be the education and religious schools which propagated greatly after the decision of the military elite to make religious education in primary and secondary schools mandatory and to increase the budget for religious affairs. Furthermore, the media was the decisive factor for bringing the message to a broader audience. Finally, and equally significant, was the informal networks that operated under the reciprocity relationship based upon religious identity whose purpose was to support the interests of the members of those networks.

What is important, however, and might be the most impressive of the factors that helped the movement increase its constituencies, are the messages delivered. The movement actually showed great adaptive abilities by remaining inside the political spirit of the era. The movement started with the message of “Islam is a solution”. Its initial effort was for a strong state and protectionist measures for the public. Recognizing the disparities in wealth and incomes, the party talked about social equality. However, having gained the support of a strong business association such as the MUSIAD and being aware of the situation in which social equality was infeasible, and moreover, with unwilling party supporters, the members of MUSIAD, the movement turned its message to justice. The party thus managed to gain the support of both the loser and the winner of social disparity.

The position that the party held about economic reforms and foreign affairs is also important. The initial opposition to the privatization of the state’s companies turned to supporting privatization when privatization seemed inevitable for the country to exit its economic crises, and why not, as this harmonization is along the lines of the goals of the

business interests that the party represents. By keeping ties to its previous positions, the party raised concerns about the conditions of the privatization and the protection of worker rights in the public enterprises.

Regarding the EU, the party turned from a stance of strong opposition to a supporter of the integration. Its anti-Zionist motto also disappeared when the party participated in the coalition government with Tansu Chiler.

The above behavior might raise questions about the real intentions of the party. Following the continued banning by military interventions, an assessment that the changing messages are coming as a venue for the party to avoid subsequent banning, will not be completely unjustifiable. However, no matter the deeper intentions, the party showed a great adaptability to the current political realm. More important is that its adaptability has to do with the message that actually is disseminated and which might be what is worrying the party: its Islamic orientation.

From all the above issues, it can be inferred that the party seeks accommodation. This, of course, is not something new. Similar patterns have been adopted by other Islamic parties throughout the Middle East. This was the path for more fundamental political movements than the smooth, and at least non revolutionary or violent, Islamic movement in Turkey. Hisbolahs, for example, which seeks political power, and the Hamas enquiry towards political participation, or finally the Muslim Brotherhoods in Egypt, which seek access to state authority, highlight similar trends.

Based on these aforementioned issues, the danger that the Islamic party poses toward the western orientation of the country might not be so great. In any case, what actually is being demonstrated is a continuous adaptation, which if it continues, will result in how the party loosen its ties to Islamic values and its appeal as something that can make a difference. In regards to this previous idea, it is important to note that the party has never actually governed the country. Its participation in the government was via a coalition governments in which it was a minor participant. Moreover, when the party was the major participant, it did not remain in power for long since the military intervened and ended its tenure.

Thus, the “Islamic solution” was never put to the test and likewise, was never infected. Moreover, the continuous banning by the military elite could be a factor that increases its constituencies simply as a reaction to differentiate depression and as a factor that can create identity. It has also been voiced that political Islam derives ammunition from the authoritarian conception of the state.<sup>34</sup>

Hence, the impressive win of the AKP in the last elections is not a matter of luck.

### **1. The AKP**

Of course, the prospects of the final incarnation of the AKP are appearing. The AKP gained the majority of the votes and succeeded in creating a powerful government having 363 of the total 550 seats. However, Islamic politics under the AKP appear differently both to the constituency and the leadership.

The liberalization processes of the 1980’s have made the emergence of an Islamic media possible . The media has challenged the authority of the traditional ulema and helped in the creation of a new urban intellectual class able to preach its message to a large audience. Moreover, these intellectuals are critical of the ulema and accuse it of lacking the skills to handle contemporary social problems.<sup>35</sup> There are also Islamic movements composed of followers of the Nurcu movement<sup>36</sup> who dominate the Islamic communities. Prominent is the Gullen movement whose goal is the needs of the middle class and bourgeoisie. Moreover, it seeks to improve Turkey by using the market and education, it stresses the role of the merchants in improving Turkey and it emphasizes tolerance of other cultures.<sup>37</sup> It appears, though, that a new stance and more enlightened approach towards Islam do exist.

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<sup>34</sup> See Sibel Bozdogan and Resat Kasaba “Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey,” p. 48.

<sup>35</sup> For a complete description about the intellectuals see M. Hakan Yavuz, “Islamic Political Identity in Turkey,” pp. 103 – 131.

<sup>36</sup> Said Nurcu (1877-1860) argued that there is no contradiction between religion and science.

<sup>37</sup> For a thorough description of the Gullen movement, see M. Hakan Yavuz “Islamic Political Identity in Turkey,” pp. 179-205.

The media and intellectuals also paved the way for the new Islamist generation open to new ideas on societal improvements.<sup>38</sup> The above differentiation is more evident in the leadership. Tayyip Erdogan, the leader of AKP, appealed to the youth, the Islamic Yuppies and intellectuals.<sup>39</sup> There is an emerging new class which remains moderate in its approach to politics. Erdogan also moved the party away from clientilistic politics and created horizontal ties among the people. Although the party continues to keep its Islamic stamp, the perception of the leadership and the new constituency might move it towards mainstream politics instead of identity politics as it was initially.

As regards the EU project, the party appears now to have strong supporters. This stance might have to do with the posture of the military. However, the party now appears to strive for a solution to the Cyprus issue that is one of the EU prerequisites. The constituency also is being derived from a class with different ideas although they maintain Islamic values. Moreover, the support of entrepreneurship organizations seems to seek the economic advantages of EU integration. Thus, the Islamic factor for the western orientation of the country might not be a threat. Moreover, notwithstanding the results of the elections, and even if the idea that the supporters of the Islamic political movement will support a more radical Islamic solution is accepted, the majority of the population remains completely secular. Hence, the imposition of Islamic law and its derivatives for the country's policy are all the more difficult.

## **2. Conclusion**

The path of Islamic politics was highlighted as a threat for the orientation of the country. It is also believed that its increase could threaten the EU project and move the country towards the East. Although it appears to move with radical approaches, the movements turned to a moderate one. Its stance toward the EU seems now to be friendlier. An increased constituency might not be the product of the beliefs of the people that they must move toward the "Islam is the solution" idea, but a combination of many

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<sup>38</sup> For the Islamist new Generation, see Jenny B. White "Islamist Mobilization in Turkey," pp. 131-149.

<sup>39</sup> Jenny B. White "Islamist Mobilization in Turkey," p. 137.

other factors having to do with the inability of the other political parties, the worsening economic situation, the liberalization processes, and the causes and results of all these factors.

The final product might be a movement that will lean towards the political arena relaxing its Islamic character. By following this type of path thus far, a party such as the Christian democrats, will be closer to characterizing the values of the current Islamic movement in Turkey as expressed by the main representative of the AKP. As such, its policy and orientation will be unlikely to create impediments to the EU efforts.

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### **III. TURKEY AND EUROPEAN UNION: THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Turkey's efforts for EU integration began at the inception of modern Turkey. Kemal Ataturk, the father of modern Turkey, declared the creation of the Turkish republic and strived for the Europeanization of the country. The former prominent military figure became the first president of modern Turkey and declared Ismet Inonu as Prime Minister.

Kemal Ataturk insisted that the military must not be involved in politics<sup>40</sup>, and Ismet Inonu helped to form an opposition party, and thus, the transformation to democratic politics occurred.<sup>41</sup> However, since the first political party was created on a military basis, the role of the military was important in Turkish politics, and has remained so since then as is obvious from the three military interventions that occurred in modern Turkey and the recent silent coup in 1997.

Besides the strong role towards political power, the military also sustained the western orientation of the first leader. Thus, the military appeared to be the guarantor for the modernization and westernization project of the country and justified its action and strong eye towards politics as the necessary course of action for keeping the country on its right course. Therefore, efforts towards integration with the EU were rather inline with the will of the westernization project executed mainly by the military. The transformation of the European Community to the European Union highlighted a clear shift in Europe towards political considerations. As a result, the following Copenhagen criteria were concerned about such political conditions. The candidacy of the country after the decision of the Helsinki summit implies that the country must be inline with these political criteria. Among them are the democratic institutions. Specifically in Turkey, the context of democracy derives from civil military relations.

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<sup>40</sup> For Ataturk politics see James A. Bill, Robert Springborg "Politics in the Middle East," pp. 134-143.

<sup>41</sup> See Ergun Ozbudun, Contemporary Turkish Politics, Challenges to Democratic Consolidation, pp. 14-15.

Consequently, one of the main EU considerations is the role of the military in Turkish society, and specifically, civil military relations. Turkey's military is very strong and is far from the European standard. Its prominent position creates doubts about the level of democracy in the country. The military in Turkey was the protector of the Kemalist legacy and the guarantor of the Westernization and modernization project. However, the implications of membership would entail important changes in Turkey's military role since integration without change in its status is impossible.

The current chapter explores the prospects of such a change to happen in order for the country to materialize its cornerstone policy—EU integration. Thus, the chapter includes an investigation of the role of the military since the inception of the modern Turkey in 1923. The chapter follows the events and important insights of the era until the first coup in 1960. Then, it continues with the implication of the 1971 and 1980 coups until the recent silent coup of 1997.

Since the driving factor for the role of the military was the nationalism ideas that prevailed or were cultivated in Turkey, the chapter continues exploring this concept. Next, it provides some insights into the military- political interaction. There is also an assessment of the military stance in the modern Turkey, the effects of the growing civil society, the EU response to Turkey's accession since it will be important for the final course of the military issue and the final conclusion about the military response to the EU challenge.

### **1. 1960 Coup**

Turkey's contemporary history and its alignment with western ideas started with the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey on October 29 1923. Mustafa Kemal, the father of modern Turkey, became the first President and appointed Ismet Inonu as Prime Minister. The former Sultanate was abolished and the Ottoman dynasty expatriated as incompatible with the principles of republicanism.

Problematic from its inception due to differences in race and religion of the population that was incorporated into the new Republican state, the new establishment faced many early threats. Thus, a dangerous upheaval of Kurdish 1925 led by Sheikh Said and carried out in the name of Islam, forced Kemal to Introduce the Law for the

Maintenance that gave absolute power to the government.<sup>42</sup> The foundation of the republic in 1923 was characterized by a strong spirit for secularization, and discard for the notion of an Islamic state. It is important to state that the rebellion occurred on religious terms and thus confirmed the fears of a religious reaction. It was due to such events that the republican regime established itself.<sup>43</sup>

From the beginning, the dilemma was that a free representation could threaten the principles of the new state because it could cause the political activity of the old regime to act and lead to the prevalence of Islamic law. During this period, the important step for the transition to democratic rule happened in 1946 which actually ended the one party domination governing the country for almost 20 years. Opposition inside the Republican Peoples Party (RPP) regarding a land reform proposal created the initial impetus. The current leader of RPP, Ismet Inonu, encouraged the opposition's members to create their own party opening the way for a multiparty system and marking the start of a democratic process. However, this admission was given based on three points: the secular character of the state, its foreign policy, and primary education.<sup>44</sup>

The Democratic party (DP) and the National Development party during this era was a result of this initiative. The transitional process was facilitated by the moderate voices of the RPP and mainly by the democratic inclination of the prominent figure of Ismet Inonu. During the following election, the DP won 53.3% of the votes and came to power marking the peaceful transition to a democratic sense of rule. Thus, a careful transition with the help of the state power or the state elite occurred.

The transition might be a product of other factors. However, a notion exists that the state elite itself and the character of the new regime was important for this transition. Although the course of modern Turkey started with the absolutism of one party politics, the final transition to a more democratic rule was a product of the smooth character of the RPP regime and the final derivative of the Kemal reforms.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Heinz Kramer, "A Changing Turkey. The Challenge to Europe and the United States," p. 6.

<sup>43</sup> Ayse Kadioglu, "The Paradox of Turkish Nationalism and the Construction of Official Identity," pp. 187-188.

<sup>44</sup> Ergun Ozbugdun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics, Challenges to Democratic Consolidation*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

Actually, there was not any important difference between the DP and RPP. The DP after the 1957 elections, responding to the declining constituency, introduced authoritarian measures against the opposition. Additionally, the clash between the DP and the state elite started when the latter used religion to garner votes.<sup>46</sup> The following public unrest resulted in military intervention on 27 May 1960. The reasons results from the legacy of the members of the DP who were former members of RPP because they learned to rule without opposition, and the conflict between the DP and public bureaucracy, which also experienced a loss of political power and income under the DP governorship.<sup>47</sup>

The 1960's coup was carried out by middle ranking officials as opposed to the 1980 coup which was executed by high ranking officials. There were also extreme voices inside the military who wanted the establishment of permanent military rule. However, the moderates prevailed and democracy was restored in both cases. In the 1960's, the military's National Unity Committee (NUC) collaborated with the main opposition party while in the second case, the military did not collaborate with any political party but proscribed all of them and permitted only three new members to participate in the 1983 elections.<sup>48</sup>

The 1961 constitution also created the National Security Council (NSC), with the participation of the highest commanders of the Armed Forces, who provided the military with a legal way to formulate national security policies.<sup>49</sup> The NSC to today still remains part of the military's involvement in Turkey's political life. However, the 1960 coup occurred mainly to resolve a constitutional crisis but no serious amendments were made to the country's constitution that retained a liberal notion.

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<sup>46</sup> Metin Heper and E. Fuat Keyman, "Political Patronage and the Consolidation of Democracy in Turkey," p. 264.

<sup>47</sup> Ergun Ozbugdun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics, Challenges to Democratic Consolidation*, pp. 29-32.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

<sup>49</sup> Umit Cizre, "Demythologizing the National Security Concept: The Case of Turkey," *The Middle East Journal*, Spring 2003, 57, 2, p. 221.

## **2. 1971 Coup**

The liberal notion of the constitution by 1960 coup encouraged the emergence of new political parties to Turkey's political scene. The Justice Party (JP) and the New Turkey Party appeared on the scene and both claimed to be the successor of the DP. It is important to note that the parties garnered more votes than the DP while the performance of the RP decreased from 41% to 37%. These results could indicate the reaction of the constituency to military intervention.

In 1964, Suleyman Demirel was elected chairman of the JP to replace the former chairman, Ragid Gumuspala, who passed away. The JP gained the majority of the votes in the 1965 elections (53%) and came to power. Its tenure from 1965 to 1971 was one of the most successful periods in Turkey which was characterized by a decrease in inflation and high development rates. Moreover, there was a substantive increase in the freedom of the press while the arrests of people for cases of freedom of thought were significantly minimized.

However, the liberal notion of the constitution facilitated the appearance of extreme movements ranging from the far left to the far right.<sup>50</sup> In addition, the students demonstrations which started in France in 1968 influenced similar movements in other countries and created strong reactions in Turkey. Under these circumstances, physical and political violence have increased and the 1971 coup by memorandum against the JP with Suleiman Demirel happened because the government was unable to handle the budding political situation. The coup came as warning to avoid the establishment of a military regime sustained by frustrated army officials.<sup>51</sup>

The memorandum led to the creation of a technocratic government according to the guidance of the military. Political violence was decreased and the constitution was revised to strengthen executive power but also limited civil liberties in the name of limiting the chances for political violence. However, the JP also wanted to make changes

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<sup>50</sup> Metin Heper and E. Fuat Keyman, "Political Patronage and the Consolidation of Democracy in Turkey," p. 265.

<sup>51</sup> Ergun Ozubgun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics, Challenges to Democratic Consolidation*, pp. 33-35.

to the constitution that were introduced by the memorandum. Moreover, the coup's constitutional amendments gave law-making powers to military authorities while enhancing its autonomy by excluding itself from review by civilian courts.<sup>52</sup>

Following a period where martial law was declared in the country, the 1973 election actually terminated the 1971 intervention. Important changes happened during this period in RPP where Bulent Ecevit replaced Ismet Inonu as the president of the party. During the elections, no party could gain the majority of the votes and a period of coalition governments started. Ecevit cooperated with the Islamic orientation National Salvation Party (MSP) and formed the government.

The coalition's tenure was marked by military intervention in Cyprus and the occupation of part of the island. The operation worsened the relationship with Europe and created impediments for its accession to the Community. The economic situation also was bad due to the oil crisis and the embargo applied by the U.S. as a result of the intervention.

With the worsening political situation, the DP appeared again under the leadership of Suleiman Demirel and formed a coalition government under the name of the Nationalist Front which remained in power until 1977. The second effort for a coalition government after the 1977 election was unsuccessful and Ecevit returned to the governorship forming his coalition government with RPP leadership. In 1979, the power shifted again to Demirel who formed a coalition government with the support of the MSP and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP). The worsening political situation led to military intervention which came after a warning to the military parties to handle the situation.

### **3. 1980 Coup**

Thus, the intervention appeared as a solution to political chaos. Again, as in the previous coups, the military facilitated the transition to democracy. The year 1960 was mainly to resolve a constitutional crisis and did not introduce any political changes as opposed to 1980 where the NSC introduced many laws regarding the political and social structure of the country. Deeper reasons for the 1980 coup was the failure of the import

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 57.

substitution strategy which created a severe economic crisis. The fear of communism also created an antidote to authoritarian tendencies. As a result, the longer duration of the coup created social and economical structural changes.

The 1980 coup is also ascribed as a result of the government's inability to cope with the increasing political violence and terrorism even if martial law was in effect in much of the country. In 1979, Ecevit lost the election and offered support to the winner of the JP in order to create a government. However, Demirel preferred the support of the NSP and NAP. Some express the view that military intervention could be avoided if the two major parties could cooperate to form a government.<sup>53</sup>

A difference between the constitution in 1960 and 1982 is that the latter gave important powers to the president as opposed to the political parties. The president could appoint the court judges and the university administrations maintaining the power of the military to the judiciary and education system. In general, the constitution was designed to maintain the power of the military in Turkey's political life.<sup>54</sup>

The coup ended with the parliamentary elections in 1983, won by Turgut Ozal, while General Evren became President of the country. In the following years, Ozal adopted a liberalization policy which revived the economy of the country. At this time, a revival of the political elite also occurred.

Ozal became President and Demirel returned to politics as Prime Minister of a coalition government of his True Path Party (DYP) and the Social Democratic Party and later as President of the country. In this period, the pro Islamic Welfare party (RP) rose under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan. The next chapter examines in detail the implication and course of Islamic politics.

In 1997, Europe rejected Turkey's candidacy which caused the deterioration of the relationship between the two parties. The year 1997 was also marked with the February 28 coup which ended the tenure of the Welfare party. The rest period is characteristic for its political instability and the worsening economic situation and the coalition governments. The coalition government with Mesut Yilmaz as Prime Minister lasted

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., pp. 40-42.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

from 1997 to 1998, and with Bulent Ecevit from 1999 to 2002. The coalition governments were formed from the center right ANAP, the center left DSP, and the nationalist MHP, which was the longest coalition government in Turkish history. They stayed in power despite their policy failures and created the greatest economic crisis in Turkey. They called for elections in November 2002<sup>55</sup> and the ANAP saved the prospects for the EU to institute reforms for the elections when a serious reform package passed to bring Turkey in line with the EU aquis.

Also, there is the banning of Virtue party, the successor of Welfare party, by the state elite, and its member's split to the SP and AKP under the leadership of Tayyip Erdogan. The military seems to remain strong to observe the course of action of the new pro-Islamic government of the AKP which came to power after the 2002 elections. It continues also to control everything that it thinks will threaten Kemalism principles, which have thus far formed Turkey's policy.

## **B. MODERNIZATION AND IDENTITY**

The military's commitment to the country's political life was not only a simple process. Turkey was created under a threatened environment. Following the decadence of the Ottoman empire and the results of WWII, the territory was facing collapse. Under these circumstances, Kemal strove to accomplish the creation of the new Turkey. The first path was strewn with many fights against both internal and external enemies. In such a threatened environment, Turkey felt that it had been a country that was constantly threatened. This perception was a reason for the military's prevalence and determined the choices made by the modernizers for the course of a modern Turkey. Another characteristic of Turkey's society was the absence of landlords so that no important power could challenge the absolutism of the state along its first path. Thus, the division between the state class and the masses was perpetuated.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Umit Cizre and Menders Cinar, "Turkey2002: Kemalism, Islamism and Politics in the Light of February 28 Process," p. 318.

<sup>56</sup> Sibel Bozdogan and Resat Kasaba "Rethinking Modernity and National Identity In Turkey," p. 40.

The Sèvres Treaty talked about the disintegration of the Ottoman empire and made the creation of a Kurdish country possible. From the moment the country was created, it had to fight against Kurdish resurgence. Thus, the Kurdish issue was always regarded as a leading threat. The Kurdish issue is an old concern for the country and one of the reasons that lead to the military prevalence in Turkey.<sup>57</sup>

Moreover, the rebellion happened under religious terms and confirmed the fears of a religious reaction. Under these circumstances, the legacy that brings suspicion to Islamic issues and mainly Islamic politics is not unexcused. Such events shaped the role of the military in Turkey.

Thus, this perception of a constantly threatened environment was the driving factor for nationalism in Turkey. The military protector of the new state was the guarantor of its territorial integrity and both the creator and spokesperson of Turkish nationalism.

The military is ascribed as the reactionary nationalist movement that uses the theme of national survival in a dramatized way. Mainly, the Army expresses the official nationalism or Atatürk nationalism and is in crisis “due to the difficulty of balancing the tension between the French-style conception of nationalism, based on the principle of citizenship and territoriality, and ethnicist variations.”<sup>58</sup>

Turkey tried to transform the nation culturally while, at the same time, retain its distinctiveness. Imposition of a total identity was difficult since there were both ethnic and religious variations. Additionally, Turkey’s nationalism and the creation of identity was a project that started from above by the elite. This was a top down and not a bottom up approach.<sup>59</sup>

The masses in Turkey remained passive recipients of the nationalist message propounded by the elite. Participation in the nationalist movement could have provided the unifying experience required for allegiance to the new regime.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Feroz Ahmad, “The Making of Modern Turkey,” p. 218.

<sup>58</sup> Tanil Bora, “National Discourses in Turkey,” p. 437.

<sup>59</sup> Ayşe Kadioglu, “The Paradox of Turkish Nationalism and the Construction of Official Identity,” pp. 179-184.

<sup>60</sup> Sibel Bozdoğan and Resat Kasaba, “Rethinking Modernity and National Identity In Turkey,” p. 43.

However, nationalist ideas are not inherently characteristic of the Turkish society. Although there is a sense that the country is under threat, which leads to a sense that increases nationalism instincts, this is not a product of self-perception but is something that is cultivated via the curricula of the secular schools.<sup>61</sup>

Thus, the creation of nationalism was a derivative of the state's policy which managed in this way to assert its necessity for the integrity and its position as the guarantor of Turkish identity. Under these conditions, it became possible for the nationalist elites to treat the construction of history and identity in an entirely instrumental fashion.<sup>62</sup>

However, the perception of identity was not stable. The military, despite the fact that they were supposed to support Kemalism principles, help in the rise of Islam in Turkey's society. They argue that "Kemalism failed to provide a new identity for Turks and created an identity crisis by divorcing them from Islam." They introduced religious courses at schools, purged left-wing members from the educational system and created a pro-religion stance.<sup>63</sup> They also transgressed the static and the state centric perception of Kemal. The liberalization process following the 1980 coup is an example of this.

### **C. PATERNALISTIC POLITICS: STATE POLITICAL ELITE INTERACTION**

The investigation of modern Turkey's political life highlights the strong presence of the military and the lesser representation of the political elite. From its inception, the military appears to intervene to correct the mistakes of the political elite and to restore order. Thus, the political –state elite interaction deserves a closer examination. Turkey has had 18 free elections from its inception; however, many do not believe that the country has a real democracy. Thus far, the country has faced many difficult times both politically but mainly economical. The military interventions appeared in any case as the only way for the country to exit the crisis.

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<sup>61</sup> See Sam Kaplan, "Din-U Devlet All Over Again? The Politics of Military Secularism and Religious Militarism in Turkey Following the 1980 Coup," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 34, 2002, pp. 113-125.

<sup>62</sup> Sibel Bozdoğan and Resat Kasaba, "Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey," p. 45.

<sup>63</sup> Feroz Ahmad, "The Making of Modern Turkey," p. 220.

This could be ascribed to the inability of the political elite. However, from the beginning of the Republican state, a special relationship existed between the military and political elite. Do not forget that the first party was created by a military leadership. Although reform ideas and the commitment of some people to democracy, such as Ismet Inonou, led to the multiparty politics in 1946, the military always kept a powerful position behind the scenes and was always ready to intervene.

Thus, the first coup was easy and stabilized the power of the military elite with the creation of the NSC in 1961. Following the coup, the political parties appeared to be under the will of this elite, and in many cases, they strived mainly to gain military support in order to remain in power.

Closer to the second coup, politicians appeared to complain to military commanders about the behavior of their leaders.<sup>64</sup> Some parties also insisted on the proclamation of martial law to gain the sympathy of the army.<sup>65</sup> The reason for the coup in 1971 was to restore the political chaos. Some assert that the coup would have avoided if the two stronger parties had cooperated. Cooperation would have led to the creation of a strong government, and therefore, intervention would be unnecessary. However, as Demirel, the leader of one party said, since the military wanted to intervene nothing could stop it.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, cooperation was not so easy since one party represented the left and the other the right. Finally, Demirel won the election with 45% of the votes, a percentage that is not small for a strong government. Compared to the elections after 1987 or the current government which is the majority and won with 35% of the votes, Demirel's situation, is in any case, far better. A slight modification to constitution could restore the situation and lead to the creation of a strong government.

The situation is not better in the current context. The National Security Council dominates political scene and determines the policies and priorities. Erbakan signed his government's death warrant by not understanding that NSU recommendations are actually orders and must be implemented immediately.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, after the banning of

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<sup>64</sup> Ergun Ozbugdun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics, Challenges to Democratic Consolidation*, p. 42.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>67</sup> Eric Rouleau, "Turkey's Dream of Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* November/December 2000, p. 106.

his party, Erbakan asked his followers to not even protest something that declared the special relationship between the military and the political elite.<sup>68</sup> Additionally, the reformist camp in the Islamic political movement, represented by the Justice and Development Party (AKP), recognized that they must not clash with the military.<sup>69</sup>

The above relation declares who is the employee and who is the employer. The political elite, although it is the formal government of the state, appears not to have any real power. In such circumstances, the fact that it resorted to paternalistic politics is not unexcused. Since the political elite was threatened by the military, it was very difficult for it to relinquish patronage politics. The political elite has short-term goals and does not introduce reforms that will reduce the power of the military elite but chooses network ties and clientilistic politics as the only way to remain in the government.<sup>70</sup>

The instability of the political system after the 1980 coup caused the politicians to be influenced and follow the will of social interest groups in order to secure their position.<sup>71</sup> Thus, political patronage became the basic strategy for obtaining votes and religion was frequently used for this purpose. On the other hand, the state elite and military have been the driving factor for the Westernization of society and they have complete autonomy in their policies from all the other groups, the political elite included.<sup>72</sup>

During the course of modern Turkey, Ozal was the only politician who decreased the influence of the Army during its tenure and also became the first civilian president in 1989 since the era of Celal Bayar.<sup>73</sup> The period during Ozal's tenure experienced low inflation rates, much development and a liberalization process which increased the country's economy. However, what Ozal succeeded in accomplishing in state – political interactions later turned in favor of the military once again. Economic performance

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<sup>68</sup> Soli Ozel, "Turkey at the Polls. After the Tsunami," p. 88.

<sup>69</sup> Umit Cizre and Menders Cinar, "Turkey2002: Kemalism, Islamism and Politics in the Light of February 28 Process," p. 326.

<sup>70</sup> Soli Ozel, "Turkey at the Polls. After the Tsunami," p. 88.

<sup>71</sup> Heinz Kramer, "A Changing Turkey. The Challenge to Europe and the United States," p. 15.

<sup>72</sup> Metin Heper and E. Fuat Keyman, "Political Patronage and the Consolidation of Democracy in Turkey," p. 259.

<sup>73</sup> Feroz Ahmad, "The Making of Modern Turkey," pp. 216-217.

decreased while in some cases moved towards an economic crisis and the military appeared at this time to be more assertive to its will. Ozal's successors had neither the ability nor the favorable circumstances to do this.<sup>74</sup>

#### **D. PRESENT SITUATION**

##### **1. Assessments**

##### ***a. Military Changing Its Position because of Threats***

From the time modern Turkey was created, the state elite remained the same with the exception of the ulema. Thus, the traditional dichotomy between the center and periphery strengthened under the authoritarian policy. The political elite was limited by the military's values. The democratic values have been subservient to the value of the state. The 1982 constitution declared that secularism, the principle of nationalism and the republican character, cannot be changed.<sup>75</sup>

Although the military assert itself as the guarantor of the Kemalist legacy, events demonstrate that its commitment to this legacy was not stable. Actually, the military stayed in power longer and was contradictory to Kemalist principles, such as the case of Islam support in the 1980's and the liberalization of the economy. Hence, the Kemalist legacy is not a stable principle in the Army but it handles as it sees fit.<sup>76</sup>

The military faced the threat of the Kurds in the name of Islam. The modernization project, additionally, had to be conducted with the suppression of Islamic forces. Thus, the military appeared to suppress Islam during each inception. However, the 1980 coup shows a completely different path. Using the excuse to counter weight the left, the military backed Islam to introduce changes to the curricula of the schools emphasizing the importance of religion. This pro Islamic stance of Evren and Ozal contributed to the rise of political Islam in the country. Later, when the left had been discredited by the collapse of the Soviet Union, the military was necessary to protect the country from the Islamic threat.

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<sup>74</sup> Eric Rouleau, "Turkey's Dream of Democracy," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2000, p. 110.

<sup>75</sup> Heinz Kramer, "A Changing Turkey. The Challenge to Europe and the United States," pp. 8-9.

<sup>76</sup> Feroz Ahmad, "The Making of Modern Turkey," p. 214.

It appears, though, that the military is always present and must remain strong as the only power that can fight threats but threats that the military itself has helped to create in some cases. The situation is similar to the military and political elite interaction. The military always arrives to correct the situation and restore order in a difficult way that the inability and the corruption of the political elite created. However, the political elite was never powerful enough to introduce reforms that could handle a difficult situation or to enhance the democratization process better.

A difficult political environment also exists where the political elite is under siege. When the economy and security are proceeding well, the position of the political elite could strengthen. However, when the things turn sour, their appreciation decreases. The situation might be more intense than before. The 1980 coup imposed a territorial threshold in order to increase the strength of political parties and to reduce fragmentation.<sup>77</sup> However, the party system became more fragmented. Moreover, it resulted in coalition governments who all strive for their constituency. Additionally, it could result in unequal representation as happened in the final 2002 elections. A government was formed by 53% of the people while the majority remains without any representation at all.

Under these circumstances, if things will turn sour, military intervention will be likely be desirable by the majority of the people since it will be the only way to change the government. Thus, it seems that a vicious circle is perpetuated where the military always strives to restore the situation but always remains also as the reason for this situation that it comes to restore, and the resolver always has the support of the people. For example, many have praised the military for its stance towards the Islam.

***b. The Emerging Civil Society?***

It is true that until now, the military continues to enjoy the support of Turkey's society. However, this society has to show a growing level of maturity. This maturity is also evident by the result of the election after Ozal's era in which the preferences in political parties changed to a large degree. It can be inferred that people do not remain loyal along political lines, but they punish, or appraise the political parties

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<sup>77</sup> Third World Quarterly, Ziya Onis, "The Political Economy of Islamic Resurgence in Turkey: The Rise of the Welfare Party in Perspective," December 97, Vol. 18, Issue 4, p. 752.

according to their performance, mainly in economic issues. This might be a product of the liberalization process of the 1980's or the increasing role of the media, but in any case, shows an evolution in Turkey's democratization path.<sup>78</sup>

The transformation of the economy and the increase of the private sector also influenced the preferences of young Turks. Although state employees or military officers are greatly respected, the youth now seem more likely to seek jobs in the business world.<sup>79</sup>

Furthermore, the military is a prominent economical factor and investment factor in Turkey's economy.<sup>80</sup> Therefore, accusations about the political elite's mismanagement that created the economic crisis in Turkey while the military stays clear are not unquestionably accepted by civil society.

On the other hand, the liberalization processes of the 1980s paved the way for new elites to appear on the political scene. The expansion of the media also largely contributed to the appearance of new voices, and in many cases, are coming out against the military position. Thus, the continuation of the current situation is not easy for the state elite. Moreover, entrepreneurship organizations, which were pro-military appeared now to be strong supporters of the EU which makes the military stance more difficult.

The strong secular entrepreneurship organization (TUSSIAD) which helped the 1980 military coup is now a stronger supporter of democratization and EU accession and has come to realize that it must participate directly in politics.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Ali Carkoglu, "Turkey's November 2002 Elections: A New Beginning?" pp. 30-31.

<sup>79</sup> F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," p. 31.

<sup>80</sup> For a description about Turkey's military as an economic factor, see Eric Rouleau, "Turkey's Dream of Democracy," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2000, pp. 108-110.

<sup>81</sup> Feroz Ahmad, "The Making of Modern Turkey," p. 217.

The Helsinki summit which also raised hopes for integration provided the opportunity for a stronger commitment towards the implementation of the measures. In such an environment, the military position comes into question. Some voices from the political elite started to imply that the national security issue was handled by the military in order to assert its position in civilian affairs.<sup>82</sup>

Pragmatically, the national security issues remained the strong impediments to the democratization process. For example, the Army always points at the threat of Kurdish and Islamic resurgence. It was impossible to have an organization that supported matters on the Kurdish issue under the constitution of 1982.<sup>83</sup> However, the suppression of this issue has important effects on human rights. This is an important aspect for Europe, and moreover, a sensitive issue in the United States regarding politics in Turkey. In 1994, a veteran congressman responded “You’ve been telling me that for 25 years!” when he was informed that human rights in Turkey were improving.<sup>84</sup>

However, a real improvement has occurred in such aspects in recent years. The reformation package that was passed by the government is also important, which allows the use of Kurdish.<sup>85</sup>

The problem is that the Army continues to determine what the threat is. With the capture of Ocalan, Islamism became the first priority of these threats.<sup>86</sup> The rise of the AKP in the government in the 2002 elections, combined with a strong victory since it gained the majority of the seats, is of great concern for the military. The military issued its warning against the government raising security concerns regarding Cyprus and EU

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<sup>82</sup> Umit Cizre, “Demythologizing The National Security Concept: The Case of Turkey,” *The Middle East Journal*, Spring 2003, 57, 2, pp. 213-214.

<sup>83</sup> Heinz Kramer, “A Changing Turkey. The Challenge to Europe and the United States,” pp. 17-19.

<sup>84</sup> Katherine A. Wilkens, “Turkey Today: Troubled Ally’s Search for Identity,” p. 62.

<sup>85</sup> Ali Carkoglu, “Turkey’s November 2002 Elections: A New Beginning?” p. 38.

<sup>86</sup> Soli Ozel, “Turkey at the Polls. After the Tsunami,” p. 85.

policies, and the possibility of Islamic rule. Confrontation with the military is a possibility. Opinion makers did not support the military's message and some feel that a confrontation might be better for the democratization process.<sup>87</sup>

The current situation appears to be highly unstable. The political elite strives to bring reforms that will be inline with EU recommendations, the military raises security issues and stresses the Islamic threat, and a representative party of Islamic politics holds power. This stressful environment was marked by the refusal of Turkey to allow the use of bases by U.S. forces during the Iraqi Freedom operation, which disproved the prediction of Carol Migdalovitz and highlighted the assessment by Ian O. Lesser regarding the predictability of Turkey's foreign policy.<sup>88</sup>

The path of politics in Turkey also highlights some important points. The initial one party politics successfully paved the way for further democratization of the country when it allowed different voices to form their political parties, and thus creating the multiparty era. This, of course, happened because the state elite admitted such an outcome. The process also has been facilitated by the prevalence of moderate voices in both the government and the opposition. These moderate voices and the strong commitment to democracy of people such as Ismet Inonu, who belonged to the state elite, show that the military view is not a monolithic one.

The first coup in 1960 also appeared as a restoration to democratic rule. Moreover, it created a liberal spirit in Turkey which lived during one of the most free periods in its political life. Here again, although some of the military members insisted on the imposition of martial law, the moderates prevailed and made the transition to democratic rule possible.

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 92. See also Sibel Bozdogan and Resat Kasaba, *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity In Turkey.* The author asserts that when nationalism is the ideological environment of modernization, it is the state elites who have to be defeated in order for modernization from above to be a full project of modernity, p. 46.

<sup>88</sup> Carol Migdalovitz assessed that Turkey would allow the use of its bases by the U.S. See Carol Migdalovitz, "Iraq: The Turkish Factor," CRS Report for Congress. Order Code RS21336, Updated 31 October 2002, p. CRS-6. Ian O. Lesser assessed that Turkey is at a crossroads. Successful economic reforms could lead to political reforms. On the other hand, the failure to introduce political reforms and dismantle the elements of the Kemalist state could exacerbate the conflict inside Turkey's society and render Turkey a less stable and predictable ally. Ian O. Lesser "Turkey, Greece, and the U.S. in a Changing Strategy Environment: Testimony before the House International Relations Committee Subcommittee on Europe," p. 3. Actually, a large majority of the population (about 90%) did not approve of the involvement in the war.

The same results are appearing after the 1980 coup. Although the intervention according to the military was seen as a necessity to restore the inability of the political parties and the worsening situation, and even if they could keep their position in the government, they decided not to do so and facilitated the free elections in 1983. The period also started with the liberalization policies of Ozal, which enhanced the country's economy and was marked by the increase of the political elite's prestige and its relative position vis-à-vis the military.

Thus, it is true that such moderate voices do exist in the. They also seem to act according to circumstances and are able to take the situation i hand but are also able to transmit the power when their full engagement in governorship is no longer necessary. They always, however, maintain a strong position behind the scenes and are always ready to intervene when things turn sour in their judgment.

Their engagement is achieved either with their support or cooperation with some parties, as was the case after the first coup in 1960, or with their direct guidance for the country's policy using institutional power, such as the NSC. Nonetheless, their position is always constitutionally based. Their commitment so far, whether successful or unsuccessful, was desirable in some cases. However, the Turkish corner stone policy, the EU accession, cannot go forward if the military continues to enjoy its current status.

## **2. EU Interaction**

This is not negotiable and the only way for the country to be successful is for the military to accept a far less prominent role in the alignment with the standards of the West. Since Turkey has the power to do so, the final decision seems to be its own. To the extent that the military understands this, the better the future of Turkey, its accession to the EU, and its alignment to the western standards, and to the extent that moderate voices will prevail, such an outcome will be a possibility.

In order, however, for this to actually occur, the military must be convinced of the benefits of accession. First of all, they must be convinced of the EU's intensions. Voices already doubt the real interests of the EU and they believe that the EU will always find something to reassess and postpone concerning the Turkish accession.

However, the case for integration is not only a one way street.. The EU also has to participate. The EU must assert and continuously voice its interest in Turkish candidacy. This is much more important now that Turkey is at a crossroads. Until now, Europe's response has not always been encouraging. Opinions stated such as from the Prime Minister of Luxemburg that torturers could not sit at the EU table are only a factor that strengthens the questions in Turkey over which path it should follow.<sup>89</sup>

Also, the military does have its reasons for taking such cases seriously since whatever efforts that have to be done implies a decrease in its long standing rights. Thus, a response of the type that "EU will never accept Turkey and Turkey must search for new allies"<sup>90</sup> comes as a natural derivative and creates impediments to any reforms. Moreover, it threatens the long-standing orientation of the country, which is of great concern when taking in account Turkey's strategic importance.

Such a climate has created two different groups in Turkey, the integralists who are now pro EU and the gradualist who want to appear to be skeptical about the reforms that need to be introduced in Turkey for the purpose of EU integration.<sup>91</sup> Such an outcome, of course, will likely perpetuate as far as the military which is not sure of EU intensions, and means that they will stop in the other case. No matter the outcome, the EU factor is of great importance in the creation of a framework, which will facilitate the transition if this is ever to come to pass.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

There is a sense that the role of the military is changing in Turkish society and this will likely change more under the pressure of modernization and the growing civil society.<sup>92</sup> Undisputedly, the military is still in a prominent position in Turkey's political

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<sup>89</sup> F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," p. 57. Additional examples show the EU stance is not clear: the Christian Democratic Party declared that the EU is a civilization project and Turkey has no place within in. Meltem Muftuler-Bac, "The Never-Ending Story: Turkey and the European Union," *Middle Eastern Studies*: October 1998, 34; 4, p. 240.

<sup>90</sup> Umit Cizre and Menders Cinar, "Turkey2002: Kemalism, Islamism and Politics in the Light of February 28 Process," p. 315. The comment is from Tuncer Kilinc, the Secretary General of the NSC.

<sup>91</sup> See Ersel Aydinli and Don Waxman, "A Dream Become Nightmare? Turkey's Entry into the European Union," *Current History*, November 2001, pp. 381-382. As the authors write, the gradualists-where the military belongs- are pro-EU. They also, however, believe that Turkish society needs to be more advanced for real democracy before the reforms take place. They want to postpone integration to a future time when Turkey will be ready for it.

<sup>92</sup> F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," p. 29.

life. So far, the military was the custodian of the Kamalist legacy, and in some cases, appeared as the supporter of democratization and mainly the western orientation of the country. Its full commitment to western ideas was the crucial factor for Turkish cooperation with the West.

The military's interventions also has been justified as needed to eliminate threats having to do with the leftist forces or Islamic forces which could threaten the long-standing western orientation. In such cases, its commitment was desirable since Turkey was always and continued to be of great strategic importance.

The strong eye on the Turkey's politics is understandable since the country faces or perceives to face many threats both internally but also internationally. The Kurdish issue was and continues to be one of great concern for the country, and the prevalence of Islamic forces could threaten its policy orientation and reverse the current pro-western stance, something that is undesirable, of course, for the West.

As long as these cases are perceived as great threats, the military stance will be unlikely to change. As long as the political elite seems to not have the ability to act and policies are not stable, the military will be always there to restore the situation. The course shows, however, that society is ready for a real democracy, there are fewer military supporters and the entrepreneurship elite seems to want EU accession. Under these circumstances, the continuation of the military's prominent role comes into question. The military however, remains strong and a possibility of another intervention and its stabilization in Turkey's politics is not unlikely. Moreover, confrontation with political elites is not unlikely and although some believe that confrontation could be better for the democratization process, the military enjoyed and continues to enjoy great support from the people.<sup>93</sup> Thus, a confrontation will be likely to bring the military to the fore at least in the short term.

Nonetheless, the military thus far has followed a moderate path. The prevalence of the moderates during the first period and the prominent figure of Inonu enabled the transition to a multiparty rule although they could do not do so. The prevalence of

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<sup>93</sup> See, for example, Eric Rouleau, "Turkey's Dream of Democracy," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December, 2000, p. 113.

moderates also enabled the peaceful transition to democracy in the following two coups and thus avoided the imposition of permanent martial law. To the extent that the moderates will prevail again in the current military establishment, a positive outcome will be likely.

However, Turkey felt in many cases that its strategic concerns are threatened by these reforms. Thus, the outcome will likely be to interfere with how these reform threats are perceived. Hence, the outcome does not only result from Turkey's intentions. The EU must, in turn, provide additional guarantees for the integrity of the country. The help of the EU is completely desirable in this difficult phase. First, the EU must declare its support and its strong desire for Turkish integration. Policies which do not declare this support will continuously exaggerate the bad climate. Declarations such as Turkey is a big problem does not help but only make the possibility of any reform more difficult.

The United States also could help Turkey in this difficult path. Although the real objection of United States could be not the integration but the convergence of Turkey with the EU standard<sup>94</sup>, the Turkish commitment to democracy could be inline with the Bush security strategy and provide a clear paradigm for democracy in a Muslim country. Additionally, the democratization process could bring Turkey inline with the Western standard and become a predictable ally as Ian O. Lesser supports.

To the extent that such help of both the EU and the United States will be provided to the Turkish current crossroad phase and to the extent that the moderates will prevail on the military elite, an alignment with the Western standard military position and a transition to a real democracy could materialize. To the extent that this commitment will not happen and extremes will prevail in the military, the military will continue to dominate Turkish political life. Additionally, since the military stokes the fires of the nationalistic mood and the threats that the country faces, it is possible to even see the creation of such threats in order for the military to assert itself and sustain its importance

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<sup>94</sup> Opinion supported by Ian O. Lesser, "Turkey, Greece, and the U.S. in a Changing Strategy Environment: Testimony before the House International Relations Committee Subcommittee on Europe," p. 9.

and its position. In such a case, the accession to the EU will postponed for the time being, and the destabilization of the area will be more likely. This, of course, is not in the interests of the West.

The military continues to be the stronger factor in Turkish politics. Its position creates impediments to the democratization process and also other important aspects for EU accession as democracy and human rights seem to be a derivative of its status. Considering its strong position, the military will be by far the most decisive factor in the results of EU integration and as it seems until now, the final decision will be in its own right.

## **IV. HUMAN RIGHTS AND KURDS: THEIR IMPLICATIONS TO EU ACCESSION**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

In 1993, at the Copenhagen European Council, the Member States created an important framework for the accession of new members. Thus, the subsequent enlargement must be enacted according to the criteria inside this new framework. The decision was that every country in Eastern and Central Europe desiring to become a member could do so. As a result, the question became not whether a country would become a member but how will this be done. The criteria according to the framework imply that the countries need to satisfy certain economic and political requirements. The Member States also have designed the membership criteria, known as the Copenhagen criteria.

The political criteria as adopted in Copenhagen require that the candidate country achieve stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities.<sup>95</sup> Additionally, the candidate member has to prove the “ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the political, economic and monetary”<sup>96</sup> goals the union has created. In other words, the country must provide the necessary administrative structures for the effective implementation of the European Community legislation through these structures.

Turkey as a candidate member must comply with these criteria. Human rights and minority rights were one of the most sensitive issues in Turkey’s effort for accession. Turkey’s concerns result from feelings of insecurity coming to the fore if these measures must be taken. One of the main reasons for this insecurity derives from the large Kurdish population and the fact that some adopted violent and separatist movements. It is estimated that approximately 8 to 24 million Kurds live in Turkey. This is very significant proportion taking into account that Turkey’s population is 69,626,000 which means that 1 out of 8 or 1 out of 3 is of Kurdish origin. Human rights is also a significant issue for the same reasons in Turkey. The current chapter explores Turkey’s efforts

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<sup>95</sup> See European Council in Copenhagen 21-22 June 1993 Conclusions of the Presidency par 7.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

concerning these criteria, the treatment and importance of the Kurdish issue for the country and the implications of both the Kurds and human rights for the accession of Turkey to the EU. Specifically, the chapter explores the progress of Turkey towards these issues since the Helsinki summit and assesses the steps and the implications of these steps for the possibility of future membership.

## **B. THE KURDISH ISSUE**

The chance to create a Kurdish independent state occurred after the end of WWI. The Treaty of Sevres in 1920 planned the formation of this state. However, it was suppressed three years later by the Treaty of Lausanne. The Allies accepted the annexation of most of Kurdistan to the new Turkish state, and the remainder of the territory was divided between Iran, Iraq and Syria.<sup>97</sup>

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the father of modern Turkey, never recognized the Treaty of Sevres. Mustafa Kemal started the national war of liberation in 1919. In his effort to mobilize support from all ethnicities in Turkey's territory, he stressed the common religious bonds between the Kurds and Turks. An emphasis on religion also existed in the National Pact Adopted in January 1920, a document considered the Declaration of Independence of the Turkish Nation. The term nation, used to denote a community of believers, was utilized to assert an identity that incorporated all the Islamic groups with different ethnic backgrounds in Turkey.<sup>98</sup>

From the beginning, the Kurds did not have the right to use their language except at home. The Turkish government also helped to create untruth scholarly studies aimed at proving that Kurdish was ancient Turkish that actually now does not exist, that Kurds are Turks who were corrupted by Iranian influence, and that Kurdish is actually a Turkic dialect and so forth.<sup>99</sup>

Since the Kurds considered themselves a different ethnicity and the memories of the Treaty of Sevres were still fresh in their minds, an uprising for independence would be highly probable during the first years of Modern Turkey. Pragmatically, from the early

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<sup>97</sup> For a description of the 1920 settlement and the 1922 agenda see David Fromkin, "A Peace to End All Peace," pp. 558-567.

<sup>98</sup> Kemal Kirisci, "The Kurdish Question and Turkey," pp. 91-94.

<sup>99</sup> Paul B. Henze, "Turkey: Towards the Twenty-First Century," A Rand Note, p. 27. See also Kemal Kirisci, "The Kurdish Question and Turkey," pp. 94-103.

era, one of the greatest threats for the new regime was the rebellion in the Spring of 1995 led by Said Shaikh, a Kurdish religious leader. The rebellion appeared to be a religious uprising. However, many assert that nationalist ideas and other enhanced it, and that it was primarily a nationalist movement. In such an environment in which the new country was striving to assert and stabilize its position, the rebellion was considered a strong threat. Since then, the possibility of any other Kurdish uprising remained one of the government's great concerns. As such, any provisions or acts that could give rise to this threat was deliberately avoided while the establishment tried to increase the sense of Turkish nationalism and impose the image of Turkish identity on all Muslims. However, some argue that the development of Kurdish Nationalism resulted from Turkish Nationalism.<sup>100</sup>

Other Kurdish uprisings occurred until 1939, but none were serious, and the 1950 elections were carried out without any evidence of Kurdish Nationalism. However, the liberal constitution of 1960 created the possibility for some Kurds to begin to become aware of their ethnicity. The late 1960's saw the formation of organizations because of an increasing awareness of the problems of Eastern Anatolia. The goal of these organizations appeared to be the recognition of the Kurdish language and Kurdish cultural rights. The coup in 1971 halted the operation of these organizations, but later in the middle 1970's, some with radical and leftist ideas appeared and asserted the rights of a separate nation. The prominent and more radical among them was the PKK, which was organized in 1977 in Diyarbakir by Abdullah Ocalan. The early operations of the PKK were limited to small-scale armed conflicts and were stopped by military intervention in 1980, forcing the leadership to flee abroad. The PKK resumed operations in 1984. Turkey's response was strong and swift. The constitution was amended to react against the threatening case of Kurdish resurgence. Law 2983 banned the use of Kurdish and took measures to increase Turkish nationalism and suppress Kurdish nationalism. However, the measures proved fruitless since the PKK increased its violent operations while some feel that state repression was more effective for recruitment than PKK propaganda.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Kemal Kirisci "The Kurdish Question and Turkey," p. 103.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

During Ozal's governorship, there was shift action concerning the Kurdish issue. Ozal declared that he was also of Kurdish origin and Suleiman Demirel in 1992, as prime minister, announced that he recognized the Kurdish ethnic presence in Turkey. The ban on the Kurdish language had been lifted a year before in April 1991.

Thus, the Kurdish issues were once again the focal point with many controversial opinions regarding its emancipation. Many in the armed forces and the National Security Council (NSC) believe that no Kurdish question exists in Turkey., and there is only a terrorist problem and have opted for a military solution. However, such a policy seems unlikely to bear fruit in the long term. Others assert that a political solution will be better for this problem.<sup>102</sup>

Arguably, a concession on this issue will improve Turkey's international image. One of the greatest challenges for Turkey is the adjustment of policies towards the Kurdish population. The Kurdish issue as an aspect of Turkish and EU relations is a relatively recent phenomenon. Before the 1980's, few in Europe were interested in the Kurds. The first chance for the popularization of the Kurdish issue was the use of chemical weapons by the Iraqi government against the Kurdish town of Halabja.<sup>103</sup>

The impact of the Kurdish issue before 1994 was driven mainly by the small states of the EU. This is ascribed to the fact that small states are a strong lobby for human rights and democracy in foreign affairs. These states have been the most critical against Turkey when it started a military operation in Iraqi Kurdistan in 1995. However, with the materialization of the Copenhagen criteria, the implications for Turkey from the Luxemburg Summit, and later with the acceptance of candidacy at the Helsinki Summit, the Kurdish situation became an important issue for EU members.

The large Kurdish population and the difficulties posed by the Kurdish issue to Turkey has become a subject of literature in many cases. Projects about Kurds have contributed to the detailed examination of the subject providing their opinion for a possible viable solution. Voices vary from pessimism asserting that ethnic conflict cannot be resolved but only managed to optimistic ones, which assert that democracy could

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<sup>102</sup> For an analysis of possible political solutions from succession to federalism etc. See Kemal Kirisci "The Kurdish Question and Turkey," pp. 185-205.

<sup>103</sup> See Robert Olson, "The Kurdish Nationalist Movement In the 1990s," p. 115.

provide a solution. Some also suggest that the problem could be resolved by having strong political figures in Turkey willing to undertake the necessary reforms, while others point out the absence of real support for HADEP (People's Democratic Party, a pro-Kurdish party in Turkey), in the capital cities might suggest a possibility of real assimilation of the Kurdish people.<sup>104</sup>

Nonetheless, Turkey has continuously confronted this issue. The Turkish army fought a 15-year war against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Turkey's Kurdish questions are attributed to the socio-economic backwardness of the southeast region. The difference in development in these areas enables the General staff to detangle the Turkish problem from the lack of democracy, and connect it to the underdevelopment of the Eastern areas. However, it has been suggested that possibly the deeper root of the problem is the level of democracy and the political exclusion that characterizes Turkey's political life.<sup>105</sup> Turkey has been almost constantly a case in which political exclusion was prominent in its political life. A significant change was a program started during Ozal's era to improve the Kurd's situation. Even this limited effort demonstrated that Ozal realized that chances for membership, which was very important for Turkey, could only occur by improving political performance as well as the status of minorities and human rights.<sup>106</sup>

Nonetheless, the military remains very sensitive to the issue of Kurdish minority rights stating that the reforms required by the succession process encourage the PKK movement. The military and nationalist resistance to EU reforms has somehow resulted in the introduction of changes to the reform program signed by the Cabinet on March 19, 2001 especially regarding aspects related to the Kurds and Cyprus.<sup>107</sup> Thus, the Kurdish question poses an important impediment to the democratization of the country. However,

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<sup>104</sup> For a short but concluding account of literature about Kurdish issue see: Andrew Mango "Turkey and the Enlargement of the European Mind," *Middle Eastern Studies*, April 1998, 34, 2, pp. 184-187.

<sup>105</sup> Aee Umit Cizre, "Demythologizing the National Security Concept: The Case of Turkey," *The Middle East Journal*; Spring 2003, 57, 2, pp. 217-218.

<sup>106</sup> For the Ozal's contribution to the Turkey's efforts towards alignments with EU directives, see Ishan D. Dagi, "Human Rights, Democratization and the European Community in Turkish Politics: The Ozal Years, 1983-87," *Middle Eastern Studies*, January 2001, 37, 1, pp. 17-40.

<sup>107</sup> Hasan Kosebalaban, "Turkey's EU Membership: A Clash of Security Cultures," *Middle East Policy*, Vol. IX, June 2002, pp. 141-142.

this stance has been a black hole for Turkey's efforts and the country's image in EU societies. Prominent civilians in Europe have strongly criticized Turkey for its stance towards the Kurdish issue.<sup>108</sup>

Notwithstanding the security concerns and the implications for the domestic environment, Turkey has taken important steps in its alignment with European standards. The steps concern constitutional amendments and political reforms, which also affected the issue of human rights and minority rights as an extension of the status of Kurds.

## **C. THE PATH TO PROGRESS**

### **1. Constitutional-Political Reforms**

The decision on the candidate status of Turkey in Helsinki in 1999 has pushed Turkey to introduce a series of fundamental reforms. Soon after the Helsinki decision, a significant debate started in Turkey concerning the conditions for accession to the EU. As a result, Turkey started a series of initiatives that would help its EU efforts. The initiatives also involved human rights and the declaration that the Supreme Board will facilitate the alignment with the European standard and would give high priority to issues relating to reforms for EU accession. This effort was further enhanced by the signing of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in August 2000, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The above were an important step for the country and welcomed by the EU, which encouraged Turkey to make concrete progress as soon as possible.<sup>109</sup>

In order to facilitate the implementation of reforms for EU accession, Turkey adopted its National Program for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA) on 19 March 2001<sup>110</sup>. Using this as a political machine, important political reforms were announced that were incorporated in constitutional amendments. With the help of the NPAA, the country was able to introduce constitutional reforms created by the Parliament's Conciliation Committee and enjoyed a strong cross-party consensus. Thus, the country

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<sup>108</sup> See for example the response of Danielle Mitterand, widow of the late French president Francois Mitterand in Meltem Muftuler-Bac "The Never Ending Story: Turkey and the European Union," *Middle Eastern Studies*, October 1998, 34, 4, p. 251.

<sup>109</sup> See 2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession 8 November 2000.

<sup>110</sup> See also "Will the Program Usher Turkey into a New Era?" [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/03\\_19\\_01/for.htm#f4](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/03_19_01/for.htm#f4), accessed 15 March, 2004.

succeeded in adopting a package of 34 amendments to the 1982 Constitution on 3 October 2001. The package brought new provisions and alignment with the European Standards, mainly for Human Rights issues.<sup>111</sup> Many of the amendments were related to the Copenhagen political criteria, the Accession Partnership and the NPAA. Additionally, an effort began in the same year to reform the judicial system. Nonetheless, the status of the judiciary and the relative powers of State Security courts and military courts continued to lag far behind the European standard highlighted mainly because of non compliance with the European Court of Human Rights. Problems also continued to exist at the political level since the Constitutional Court banned the Fazilet Party in Jun 2001<sup>112</sup> declaring impediments to freedom of expression and political will.

In general, by 2001, limited improvement has occurred in practice. Nonetheless, Turkey's political will to introduce a series of fundamental reforms that would bring the country closer to the European standard and as a result to membership, encouraged after the Helsinki decision, was further enhanced in the following years. As a result, the country passed a major constitutional reform in October 2001 aimed at improving the situation in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms and restricting the reasons for capital punishment. The country also adopted a new Civil Code in November 2001, and three sets of reform packages in February, March and August 2002.<sup>113</sup>

The adoption of these reforms was important for two reasons. First, it declared the commitment of the majority of Turkey's political leaders to undertake all the efforts for the necessary reforms and their commitment to the EU project, and second, they occurred in a very difficult political and economic environment. Turkey faced a strong economic

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<sup>111</sup> Data for the reforms in 2001 are derived from the Commission of the European Communities Brussels, 13 November 2001, Sec (2001) 1756 "2001 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession".

<sup>112</sup> See [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/06\\_13\\_01/dom.htm#d4](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/06_13_01/dom.htm#d4), "Constitutional Court Weighs Fate of Virtue Party," accessed 17 March 2004.

See also [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/06\\_23\\_01/dom.htm#d2](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/06_23_01/dom.htm#d2), "Constitutional Court Bans Virtue Party," accessed 17 March 2004.

<sup>113</sup> Data for the reforms in 2002 are derived from the Commission of the European Communities Brussels, 9 September 2002, Sec (2002) 1412, "2002 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession."

crisis in 2001 and a more severe one in 2002. The governor party also called for early elections under the pressure of the worsening political instability. Thus, the reforms proved to be a major shift in the Turkish context.

The reform package adopted by Parliament in August 2002 and just before the call for early elections was especially very important since it introduced changes in important issues mainly for the development of freedom and human rights.<sup>114</sup> Among other changes were those made to Article 159 of the Turkish Penal Code stating that the expression of opinions against public institutions would no longer be a crime when not intentionally expressed to harm such institutions. Also, changes affecting Articles 312 of the Penal Code and the Anti-Terror Law, the Press Law, the Law on Political Parties and the Law on Associations actually improved the conditions of freedom in these areas.

Moreover, a constitutional amendment was implemented to introduce changes to the composition and role of the National Security Council. However, as the 2002 Regular Report on Turkey's progress states, these last reforms did not appear to have changed the manner in which the National Security Council operates in practice.

Turkey continued its reform effort in 2003. Thus, Turkey ratified the Civil Law Convention on Corruption. As a result, on 1 January 2004, it became a member of the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO). Turkey also ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, on Social and Economic Rights as well as Protocol 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The country adopted four new major packages of political reform introducing changes to different areas of legislation. Some of the reforms were very important for political criteria since they concerned very sensitive Turkish, such as freedom of expression, freedom of demonstration, cultural rights and civilian control of the military. The seventh reform package adopted in July 2003 was very significant for such issues.

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid. See also "Turkish Legislature Makes History with Comprehensive Reforms" [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/08\\_03\\_02/dom.htm#d1](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/08_03_02/dom.htm#d1), accessed 19 March 2004.

The 2003 Regular Report on Turkey's progress is important as it states that the new Parliament elected on 3 November 2002 supported these reform packages with overwhelming majorities declaring its support for better alignment with the values and standards of the European Union.

The country also ratified the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights with some reservations concerning its applications. Nonetheless, in April, the Constitutional Court canceled the Law Decree No. 285 of the Emergency Rule Administration Law, which prevented judicial recourse against decisions of the governor's emergency rule enhancing the autonomy of the judiciary. Moreover, the Parliament adopted a law on 6 August 2003 that made possible partial amnesty and a reduction in sentences for people involved in the activities of an illegal organization except for the leaders of the organization. According to estimates of September 2003, of 2,067 applications, 524 prisoners were released and about 200 militants from illegal organizations surrendered by the end of 2002.<sup>115</sup>

## **2. Human Rights**

Regarding human rights, Turkey also underwent significant steps. The constitutional amendments adopted by the Turkish Parliament on 3 October 2001 helped improve human rights and fundamental freedoms. What the amendments actually produced is limited opportunities for the suppression of basic freedoms such as the freedom of expression of thought, freedom of the press and freedom of association and gender equality.<sup>116</sup> The Turkish Government also started to develop a framework for introducing further constitutional amendments with respect to freedom of expression and thought, as expected by the EU to facilitate progress towards satisfying the Accession Partnership priorities.

The ban on the death penalty has been maintained. However, Article 38 of the Constitution limited the death penalty to cases of terrorist crimes as well as in times of war or the imminent threat of war. As stated in the 2001 Regular Report on Turkey's

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<sup>115</sup> See 2003 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress towards Accession.

<sup>116</sup> Data for the reforms in 2001 are derived from the Commission of the European Communities Brussels, 13 November 2001, Sec (2001) 1756 "2001 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession."

progress, the reservation for terrorist crimes is not in line with Protocol 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) as opposed to wartime crimes permitted under Protocol 6.

Nonetheless, the reforms related to economic, social and cultural rights contained a number of positive elements. Turkey changed Articles 26 and 28, which prohibited the use of languages but further legislation and practices were needed in order for these reforms to be executed. Actually, as the 2001 report states, no improvement has occurred in the real enjoyment of cultural rights for all Turks, irrespective of their ethnic origin. Therefore, despite changes, the actual human rights conditions in Turkey need further improvement.

To prepare for this improvement, a long public debate concerning EU accession took place in Turkey in 2002 with the participation of political parties. The debate focused on the accomplishment of the Copenhagen political criteria, particularly the abolition of the death penalty, Radio and TV broadcasting and the use of languages other than Turkish. Turkey also affirmed EU membership as the main objective of the country and of common value for almost all political parties.<sup>117</sup>

This same year, Turkey showed progress in the area of freedom of association where the law on associations was modified and some restrictions lifted. Additionally, the new Civil Code included provisions aimed at improving gender equality and strengthening guarantees regarding the protection and rights of children. Turkey ratified the 1969 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. However, as stated by the 2002 report, trade unions remained subject to restrictions and child labor continued to exist. Additionally, the legislation that allows for reduced sentences for crimes related to “honour killings” was still in effect. The August 2002 package introduced changes in important issues such as the death penalty during peacetime and removed some restrictions on the law on broadcasting. However, the prosecution of writers, journalists and publishers still continues.

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<sup>117</sup> Data for the reforms in 2002 are derived from the Commission of the European Communities Brussels, 9 October 2002, Sec (2002) 1412, “2002 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress towards Accession.”

Nonetheless, it allowed people to ask for a retrial when the European Court of Human Rights found their convictions to be in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Turkey once again was encouraged to pursue the reform process to strengthen democracy and the protection of human rights, in law and in practice overcoming the obstacles and satisfying the political criteria.

In 2003, Turkey ratified the ECHR (European Convention on Human Rights). Turkey appears to have improved the situation regarding the fight against torture and the Turkish legal system has come closer to European standards in this respect. Additionally, reform of the prison system has continued and the rights of prisoners have been improved. In practice, however, the right to a lawyer is not always ensured, and there are still cases in which torture has been applied.<sup>118</sup> Additionally, the possibility of retrial, introduced in 2002, has not been very effective, since in practice, few cases have been subject to retrial.

The adoption of the reform packages has led to the lifting of several legal restrictions on the exercise of freedom of expression. The changes to the Penal Code also have led to the release of many people imprisoned for non-violent expressions of opinion. However, some cases are still pending against people for expressing non-violent opinions. As stated in the report of 2003, progress has been achieved in the area of freedom of demonstration and peaceful assembly where several restrictions have been lifted. Nevertheless, in some cases of peaceful demonstration, the authorities used force and associations still experience difficulties in their freedom of actions. Additionally, cases of prosecution against associations, and particularly human rights defenders continue, to occur. Moreover, when passing the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Turkey issued a reservation to Article 27 that provides the right of minorities to enjoy their own culture, or religion, or to use their own language, which will be interpreted and applied in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Turkish Constitution and the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. As a result, the scope of freedom has been limited.

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<sup>118</sup> See 2003 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress towards Accession.

Regarding freedom of religion, the changes introduced by the reform packages have not yet produced the desired effects by 2003 as stated in the report on Turkey's progress. Executive bodies continue to adopt a very restrictive interpretation of the relevant provisions. As a result, religious freedom remains lag far behind European standards. Additionally, measures taken to lift the ban on radio and TV broadcasting and education in languages other than Turkish have produced little practical effect.

The above problems might lay in the reaction of the existing authorities' infrastructure. As the Human Rights Overview 2004 for Turkey states "Public demands for change, a strengthening civil society, and European Union (EU) candidacy requirements are working together to force positive change in Turkey despite continuing determined resistance within the civil service, judiciary, and security forces."<sup>119</sup>

The report also states that the country introduced substantial reforms, but violence is still evident. Additionally, it assesses that the Kurds are not yet able to enjoy the freedoms of the reforms and although an effective program for returning them to their homes after the Turkish operations in the Southeast exists, many are still far from home.

### **3. The Kurds**

Obviously, the Kurds are among the biggest problems for Turkey. Since 2000, one of the sore points for Turkey was that it has not yet signed the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Turkey actually did not recognize minorities other than those defined by the Lausanne Treaty. However, as the EU states, such minorities exist in Turkish society and they are clearly denied certain basic rights. Among them was the right to broadcast in their native language and receive instruction in their language, and the prerogative to express their views on such issues.

Especially for the Kurds, the expression of pro-Kurdish views was not permitted by the Turkish State. As the report of 2000 states, three mayors from the Southeast

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<sup>119</sup> See Human Rights Overview 2004 for Turkey at <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2003/12/31/turkey7023.htm>, accessed 1 April 2004.

belonging to the pro-Kurdish HADEP Party were imprisoned while several newspapers and magazines have been forbidden and certain pro-Kurdish associations have been closed in the region under emergency rule.<sup>120</sup>

By 2000, Turkey started a socio-economic development program in the region, aided by the disappearance of large scale armed fights in the Southeast and the reduction in conflicts between PKK armed militants and security forces. Turkey in November 1999 lifted the state of emergency in the province of Siirt and in June 2000 in the province of Van. However, the state of emergency remained in effect in four provinces, along with the village guard system. The authorities have also been willing to allow a partial return of the population to their homes.

During the next year, Turkey took many steps towards alignment with the European standards. However, as the 2001 regular report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress states, there has been no improvement in the ability of members of ethnical groups with a cultural identity and common traditions to express their linguistic and cultural identity. The issue of respect for cultural rights was particularly important for improving the situation in the Southeast. However, some cities banned organized celebrations for the Kurdish New Year.

Turkey extended the state of emergency in the Southeast on 27 October 2000, on 27 March 2001 and on 29 June 2001, for periods of four months for the four provinces of Diyarbakir, Hakkari, Sirnak and Tunceli. Reportedly, the security situation is much improved. The pro-Kurdish HADEP political party also frequently faced difficulties from the authorities, including police investigations.<sup>121</sup> Turkish authorities forbade a HADEP demonstration to celebrate World Peace Day in Ankara, scheduled on 1 September 2001.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> See 2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession, 8 November 2000.

<sup>121</sup> See "HADEP Former Leader Demir and Other Left Wing Party Leaders on Trial over their Congress Speeches," [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/06\\_01\\_01/dom.htm#d5](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/06_01_01/dom.htm#d5), accessed 17 March 2004.

<sup>122</sup> Data for the reforms in 2001 are derived from the Commission of the European Communities Brussels, 13 November 2001, Sec (2001) 1756, "2001 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession."

Over the years, Turkey has invested in an economic aid and development program for areas most affected by years of violent conflict and terrorism. The National Security Council proposed an East and Southeast Action Plan for those displaced by the operations in the region to return to their homes. Under the auspices of this plan, it was estimated that up to 26,000 people as of July 2001, returned to their villages even though they faced problems from the village guards, who are armed and paid by the state to defend the evacuated or abandoned villages. Estimates bring the number of village guards to between 45,000 and 90,000 in the region.

Following the decrease in tensions, the National Security Council recommended and the Parliament decided to lift the state of emergency in the provinces of Hakkari and Tunceli on 30 July 2002.<sup>123</sup> The lifting of the state of emergency in the two provinces of the Southeast led to an improvement in the conditions of daily life. The security situation continued to improve in the Southeast and some relaxation in daily life has been reported. As a result, the Tunceli Culture and Nature Festival took place between 1 and 4 August with no ban on bands singing in Kurdish, while some previously banned journals and newspapers appeared again.<sup>124</sup>

Efforts have continued to improve the situation of displaced persons. Further implementation of the “Return to Village and Rehabilitation Project” has occurred, and according to authorities, 37,000 persons returned to their villages by 2002.

However, the majority continued to live in very difficult economic and social conditions. The village guards system, and restrictions by the government applied as measures against terrorism, acted as a disincentive for displaced persons to return to their villages.

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<sup>123</sup> Actually implemented in August 2002 see, [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/08\\_03\\_02/dom.htm#d1](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/08_03_02/dom.htm#d1), accessed 17 March 2004.

<sup>124</sup> Data for the reforms in 2002 are derived from the Commission of the European Communities Brussels, 9 October 2002, Sec (2002) 1412, “2002 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress towards Accession.”

In August 2002, the government passed a very important reform package, which allowed the use of Kurdish.<sup>125</sup> However some groups in Turkey perceived these reforms as “concessions undermining Turkey’s unity and independence.”<sup>126</sup> As a result of the above package, some students across the country requested optional language classes in Kurdish be taught in universities. While some universities accepted several requests, they could not be submitted in others. Thus, problems for the implementation of such requests existed. Additionally, the state of emergency was extended for four months in the two other provinces of Diyarbakir and Şırnak, but the National Security Council indicated that it would be lifted in full by the end of the year. Also important to the treatment of the Kurds is that the Constitutional Court continued its judicial proceedings against the HADEP party based on the accusation that it was linked to a terrorist organization.

In its report in 2002, the EU urged Turkey to begin a dialogue with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in January 2003. The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities was, for the first time, permitted to visit Turkey with the goal of starting a dialogue on the situation of national minorities. However, no such dialogue has ensued from this initial meeting.<sup>127</sup>

The state of emergency in the two remaining provinces of Diyarbakır and Şırnak was lifted on 30 November 2002 putting an end to almost 15 years of emergency rule in the East and Southeast of Turkey; considered to positively affect the region. It has led to a relative improvement in the general conditions in the area, although considerable difficulties remained. In May 2002, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Displaced Persons noted that an opportunity exists for the international community to work with the Turkish government on the problems related to displaced persons and insisted on a more comprehensive approach on the issue. The Turkish government, considering these proposals, took initiatives that will involve international partners and NGOs.

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<sup>125</sup> Broadcasts in Kurdish was allowed later. See “Regulations Legalizing Kurdish Broadcasts on State TV Adopted,” [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/12\\_19\\_02/dom.htm#d4](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/12_19_02/dom.htm#d4), accessed 25 March 2004.

<sup>126</sup> See Ali Carkoglu, “Turkey’s November 2002 Elections: A New Beginning?” *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (December 2002), p. 38.

<sup>127</sup> See 2003 Regular Report on Turkey’s Progress towards Accession.

Implementation of the Return to Village and Rehabilitation Project has continued, even though at a slow pace, and according to official sources, lead to the restoration of 82,000 people between January 2000 and January 2003. However, authorizations to return home are still difficult to obtain by displaced persons.

Additionally, as the 2003 report states, the status of minorities is not in alignment with EU standards. Minorities have been subject to certain discriminatory practices by the authorities. There have been complaints that state-issued school history books are responsible for cultivating hostility towards minority groups. Moreover, parents belonging to different religious minorities have encountered difficulties in enrolling their children in religious minority schools.

Finally, even if the law on political parties has been amended to make it more difficult to close down parties, problems continue to exist. The Constitutional Court has already banned HADEP<sup>128</sup> and the same threat applies to DEHAP. Moreover, the Supreme Court ruled that DEHAP was responsible for submitting fake documents in order to participate in the November 2002 elections.<sup>129</sup>

The 2003 report also states that the electoral system creates impediments for minority representation in Parliament. In the elections of November 2002, for example, the Democratic People's Party (DEHAP) did not reach the 10% threshold, despite receiving over 45% of the votes in five of Turkey's 81 provinces. As a result, it remained outside of Parliament.

#### **4. The Path Ahead**

From the exploration of Turkey's reforms since the Helsinki summit, some important topics come to light. In reality, Turkey's alignment has progressed in most areas. However, it is also true that it still remains at an early stage of development for many issues, and Turkey must increase its efforts to implement its National Programme for the Adoption of the *Acquis*, in line with the Accession Partnership priorities for all issues.

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<sup>128</sup> Efforts for closure of HADEP has been started in early 1999. See "Will Closing HADEP Solve Our Problems?" [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/02\\_09\\_99/comment.htm](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/02_09_99/comment.htm), accessed 17 March 2004.

<sup>129</sup> See 2003 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress towards Accession.

During the Copenhagen Summit of December 13, 2002, the EU refused to set a date to start the accession process with Turkey.<sup>130</sup> Instead, they decided that December 2004 would be the review date for setting a date to start full membership negotiations.<sup>131</sup>

The Turkish government's main objective is to meet the Copenhagen political criteria in time to allow a positive assessment by the Commission by 2004, and thereby, pave the way for a decision by the European Council in December 2004 to start accession negotiations with Turkey. However, this possibility remains unlikely. Everyone is aware that the success of Turkey's application is tied very closely to its performance in civil and political rights as well as human rights. Therefore, if important steps on these issues are not taken and human rights not effectively promoted, Turkey's hope for immediate membership will be fruitless.

Since human rights and minority rights are one of the most important steps for Turkey's accession, the country has begun to implement reforms according to the acquis. However, an important impediment and a source of controversy is that minority rights concerns the Kurds. Turkey believes that the EU fails to understand the difference between the equal rights of citizens in the country and the separatist activities of the PKK. Thus, Turks feel that EU reforms cultivate the goals of the PKK. The EU, on the other hand, believes that a solution to the problem could result from recognition of Kurdish cultural identity and tolerance of that identity if they do not once again resort to separatist or terrorist activities.

Turkey continues to accept only the minorities described in the 1923 Lausanne Treaty and considers the rest equal under the law. The Kurds are not included as minorities in that treaty, and therefore, every Kurdish movement is considered a separatist movement. Furthermore, it believes that the free use of other languages such as Kurdish could threaten Turkey's national security. Also, Turkey is very sensitive about security issues.

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<sup>130</sup> See Copenhagen European Council 12 and 13 December 2002. Presidency Conclusions. Brussels, 29 January 2003, 15917/02, par. 18.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, par 19.

The problems concerning the aforementioned concepts are possibly derived from the democratic institutions and the peculiarities of Turkey. The Kurdish issue is extremely important to those who uphold and measure security in Turkey.<sup>132</sup> This creates difficulties for adopting acts and making decisions according to EU standards. On the other hand, and unfortunately for Turkey, no other choice exists. It must either comply with the EU directives on minority and human rights or say no to the European Union. Consequently, Turkey has gone to great lengths to ignore the EU project completely.

Thus, a solution will not be simple. The implementation of the reforms shows that Kurdish rights are still not commensurate with EU standards and Turkey has problems in granting them full rights. The capture of Ocalan, the leader of PKK, was significant. Since then, the armed conflicts have decreased since the PKK removed its fighter wing from Turkey. However, the problems with the political criteria continue to exist and seem to be interrelated. The situation of human rights cannot but affect minority rights, which has resulted in also characterizing the meaning of democracy. In Turkey, however, it is possible to describe all problems as resulting from the level of democracy.

The level of democracy derives from civil military relations. The military seems to make the important decisions concerning the policy orientation of the country. Although a significant alignment with the European standards exists, the military continues to be prominent. At least in issues related to foreign policy and security aspects, the military continues to be a decisive factor.<sup>133</sup> More importantly, the military determines the threat as well as quantifying it. Since the military believes that Kurds are an important issue and any concession could threaten the integrity of the country, any decisions made concerning such issues will not be considered high priority. As can be seen, Turkey took important steps towards the implementations of measures or constitutional amendments on such issues. However, the results are not as satisfying as the reports on Turkish progress state in many cases. Moreover, important steps have not

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<sup>132</sup> See for example the military's reaction over the recognition of the Kurdish language [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/02\\_23\\_00/dom.htm#d3](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/02_23_00/dom.htm#d3), accessed 2 April 2004.

<sup>133</sup> See for example F. Stephen Larrabee RAND "The Middle East in the Shadow of Afghanistan and Iraq". Written in May 2003 examines the implications of the impact of the Iraq war on the security of the Middle East. The author questions why the Turkey's military had not pressed for the authorization of the deployment of U.S. troops on Turkey "... especially since the military regarded security matters as their prerogative". p. 8. For more details on military case in Turkey see Chapter III.

been taken on many amendments, and Turkey still has some reservations since it believes they are special cases of security issues. However, these arguments are not acceptable to the EU, which demands complete alignment.

Thus, the security concept creates impediments to democracy and freedom, and as result, for EU membership. The political elite seem to understand this issue, which started to imply that the military stance and its security concerns could threaten the Europeanization project of the country.<sup>134</sup>

Thus far, it appears that strong reforms are being taken into consideration for security issues, and need special approval. For example, as concerns the August 2002 program, the military was a decisive factor and gave the green light on the 'condition' that integration with Europe will not contradict the military's traditional involvement in law order, internal enemies and foreign policy.<sup>135</sup>

However, the provision of 'conditions' and partial measures will not be a viable solution, and also will not have the expected results. When reviewing the reports on Turkey's progress, note that the number of pages in the reports is increasing. The report of 2000 spends 22 pages out of a total 82 in examining the political criteria while the 2001 spends 34 pages out of a total of 123 on the same topic. The 2002 Regular Report on Turkey's progress towards accession spends 44 pages out of a total of 159, and finally, the 2003 report spends 45 pages out of a total of 148 pages. This increase in the number of pages commenting on the measures taken does disregard the fact that Turkey has made much progress. For example, the comment that the electoral system creates impediments for the representation of the minorities appeared for first time in the 2003 report for progress on page 38, although it has been applied in Turkey since the 1980 coup. Therefore, remember that the entire process will not be a simple one. Europe will intentionally check whatever reforms that must be taken, and as reforms improve, verification will be more deliberate.

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<sup>134</sup> See Umit Cizre, "Demythologizing, The National Security Concept: The Case of Turkey," *The Middle East Journal*, Spring 2003, 57, 2, p. 221.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 220.

The above statements imply that whatever reforms taken must be strong and effective, and not just decisions made on paper. The political elite seems to be conscious of what the country must do. Thus, such voices exist, such as that of the former Foreign Minister Ismael Gem who stated that the “road to the EU goes through Diyarbakir.”<sup>136</sup>

However, although the political elite appears to have the will, it still does not have the power to make such important decisions. Therefore, what Turkey might need is more time until the political situation will be in alignment with the European standard and the political elite will hold total power as happens with western democracies.

Nonetheless, Turkey’s path to date is important for another reason. From the exploration of Turkey’s path to progress since the Helsinki summit, it can be seen that Turkey has undertaken many measures. Turkey has ratified five conventions with respect to human and civil rights, and human rights have improved. Turkey also has made important decisions regarding the Kurds. It is important to keep in mind that all this great transformation happened because of Turkey’s desire to enter the EU. Thus, notice how a strong institution can lead to improvements in conditions in countries. This effort happened without violence resulting from the willingness to react. Turkey alone decided to implement the reforms. Its desire was to be included in a strong institution. The institution, on the other hand, simply established the criteria. Therefore, Turkey’s case highlights the importance of improving conditions without violence, and the importance of a strong and well-designed institution that could provide incentives for a better world. As such, Turkey’s accession could be more important and become a paradigm for the improvement of society by only providing the correct incentives via the right institutions.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

Overall, in the past four years since the Helsinki summit, Turkey has made impressive legislative efforts, which constitute significant progress towards achieving compliance with the Copenhagen political criteria. However, the level of success in human rights and democracy, and mainly in minority rights, still lags behind the European Union’s standards. As stated by Rachel Denber

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<sup>136</sup> Ersel Aydinli and Don Waxman. “A Dream Become Nightmare? Turkey’s Entry into the European Union,” *Current History*, November 2001, p. 386. Diyarbakir is the largest Kurdish- Dominated city in Turkey

The reform process is certainly moving forward. But Turkish citizens will not experience real reform until they are free to assemble without fear of being beaten, tear-gassed and arrested.<sup>137</sup>

There are significant problems in Turkey with respect to human rights, minority rights, and the level of democracy. Democracy and human rights are among the prerequisites for EU succession. Turkey has shown a significant improvement during the past few years. However, it appears that the source of the problem lies in Turkey's democracy. The challenges to Turkey derive from the necessity to solve the Kurdish problem and to bring the level of human rights commensurate to European standards.

Certainly, Turkey must make strong decisions regarding the status of Kurds and it is unlikely that such decisions will be made earlier than the end of 2004. Also, it is unlikely for such decisions to be rendered until Turkey feels assured that these provisions will not increase security issues or until the security level assessments have been decided within a calmer political environment characterized by a significant decrease in nationalistic instincts. Such a situation will be difficult to cultivate in a short period of time, and will be conducted based on further alignment of civil military relations with the European standard. Also needed is long-term social maturity, which can result from 'training' the people according to European standards. Until then and before any attempt at making strong decision occurs, the state elite could raise strong objections. This reaction could, to an extent, cultivate and increase the nationalistic instincts of the country with strong repercussions for its orientation. Hence, it is unlikely that strong decisions will be made. Therefore, the decision on Turkey's accession concerning these issues will be difficult in 2004 at least regarding those prominent issues such as in the case of the Kurds.

The implementation of the reforms can be helped if the EU decides that the path of progress thus far is adequate to guarantee the country's orientation and starts the process for setting the date for the beginning of the accession negotiations. Such a move could also strengthen the image of the political elite, which could take stronger measures. Such a case, however, implies Turkey's success at the diplomatic level in order to

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<sup>137</sup> Comment by Rachel Denber Acting Executive Director Europe and Central Asia Human Rights Watch. See <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2003/12/31/turkey7023.htm>, accessed on 1 April 2004.

convince and achieve the consent of the European powers. The success of such an outcome will likely result from the strong support of the United States. Do not forget that the decisive factor in the Helsinki decision concerning Turkey resulted from U.S. support.

Despite the final outcome, Turkey has made progress and it is closer than ever to its goal. Its strong commitment thus far and its efforts with the NPAA show that its final success will only be a matter of time. Its success is also very significant since it could provide the paradigm on how to improve societies via strong institutions by only providing the right incentives.

## **V. GREECE AND CYPRUS**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

In June 1993, the Copenhagen European Council concluded that every country desiring to become a member will be able to do so upon satisfying certain economic and political criteria. The union moved towards the last enlargement taking in account the Copenhagen criteria. Cyprus was among the new candidate countries.

In 1997, at the Luxemburg summit, The European Council decided to convene bilateral intergovernmental conferences in the Spring of 1998 to begin negotiations with Cyprus.<sup>138</sup> Additionally, the accession of Cyprus was considered a useful fact that could help find a political solution to the Cyprus problem. The effort had to be made under the aegis of United Nations with the purpose of creating a “bi-community, bi- zonal federation.”<sup>139</sup> Thus, it encourages the participation of representatives from the Turkish Cypriot community. The council also rejected Turkey’s candidacy and asserted that Turkey must undergo political and economic reforms in order to have a better chance at EU accession.

However, after a period of deterioration in the relationship between Turkey and the EU, the Helsinki summit finally accepted Turkey as a candidate member.<sup>140</sup> The summit decided that Turkey could enter according to the criteria applied to the other countries. Turkey now has to pursue political reforms, which include the alignment of human rights standards with those of the EU, respect for minorities, and the stabilization of its relationship with Greece. Specifically, Turkey must make every effort to resolve any outstanding border disputes and other related issues, differences or territorial disputes using the legal process. If two countries cannot agree on a solution, t the International Court of Justice must hear these differences.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> See Luxembourg European Council Par. 27 Press Release: Luxembourg (12 December 1997)- Press:0 Nr: SN400/97.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., par 28.

<sup>140</sup> See Presidency Conclusions, Helsinki European Council 10 and 11 December 1999, par 12.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., par 4.

Also, a time limit exists for the implementation of a settlement. According to the decision, the European Council will review the disputes of candidate members keeping in mind how they affects the accession process, and in order to promote their settlement through the International Court of Justice, at the latest by the end of 2004.

Additionally, Turkey had to support a political settlement in Cyprus under the leadership of the UN and according to the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

Thus, its differences with Greece and the resolution of the Cyprus issue link Turkey's European ambitions.

The current chapter explores Greek Turkish relations and the implications to the prospects of European membership for Turkey. The Cyprus issue has been an impediment to relationships between Turkey and Greece. The chapter also explores the implications of Cyprus. Turkey invaded Cyprus in 1974, and Greek Turkish relations have deteriorated ever since. Cyprus recently became a member of the European Union. Although its accession happened without a resolution to the Cyprus problem, Turkey appeared to support this resolution and also supported the proposed plan by Kofe Anan. However, Cyprus is now a member and is able to on the EU's policy.

The chapter explores the historic relations between the two countries and their transformation in recent years resulting from Greek efforts. The chapter tries to assess the implications of this relation to Turkey's efforts, especially after the recent rejection of Anan Plan by Greek Cypriots and the accession of Cyprus.

## **B. DISPUTE WITH GREECE**

Turkey's dispute with Greece has been a possible source of conflict since the 1950's. Their differences are caused by national identity issues. The creation of Greece resulted from fighting against the Ottoman Empire after years of occupation. Greece's expansion occurred after liberating territories from the Ottoman Empire. Thus, for Turkey, Greece's independence meant a loss of territories, while for Greece, independence meant a continuous struggle against Turkey.

Greek independence started with the 1821 revolution, and since then, the country has continued to expand. The creation of modern Turkey is also related to the struggle against the Greek campaign in Asia Minor, which ended with their defeat by Kemal

Ataturk, resulted in an exchange of populations in 1923 – 1924.<sup>142</sup> Eight years after this confrontation, Kemal Attaturk and the Greek Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos signed the Ankara Agreement, thus resolving many of their differences.

During the first years of the Cold War, the two countries seemed to put aside their differences because their main priority became the threat of the Soviet Union. However, their relationship has deteriorated and posed a threat as an armed conflict on many occasions due to the differences over Cyprus.

Until now, the differences between the two countries remained unresolved and continue to be a source of tension. Prominent among them is the status of the Aegean Sea.

### **C. AEGEAN DISPUTE**

The 1982 Law of the Sea Convention determined the status and legal determination of territorial waters. According to the law, every country has the right to extend its territorial water to 12 miles. Greece signed the law and maintains the prerogative of declaring its territorial waters at this distance even though it has not yet done so. Turkey, on the other hand, has not signed the law, and thus, does not recognize the law and prerogatives of Greece. Turkey's concerns are that the increase of territorial waters from Greece to the above distance could make access to its major ports in the Aegean Sea more difficult since Greece has many islands near the Turkish western coast. As a result, Turkey threatens that any effort by Greece to increase its territorial water constitutes a *casus belli*. Greece, on the other hand, stresses the importance of these issues and raises the subject of Turkey's violation of international law<sup>143</sup> and considers any effort at negotiation to be impossible as long as Turkey continues<sup>144</sup> with its threat.

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<sup>142</sup> For a description of Asia Minor's campaign, see David Fromkin "A Peace to End All Peace. The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East," pp. 530-558.

<sup>143</sup> As Greece asserts "the islands (including the islands of the Aegean Sea) are clearly entitled to continental shelf rights, according to the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf (Art. 1) and the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (Art. 121)." Greece stresses also that although Turkey has not ratified the above Conventions the "... ICJ has explicitly accepted (1969, case of the North Sea Continental Shelf) that Article 1 of the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf should be regarded as crystallizing rules of Customary International Law, thus accepting that the islands have a continental shelf on the same footing as land territory." See [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/europe\\_southeastern/turkey/aegean\\_continental\\_shelf.html](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/europe_southeastern/turkey/aegean_continental_shelf.html), accessed April 15 2004.

<sup>144</sup> For Turkey's position, see <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/ad/ade/adeb/>, accessed 15 April 2004.

The determination about the territorial waters also created additional disputes between the two countries. Greece retained Aegean airspace for 10 nautical miles from the coasts. Turkey rejects Greece's airspace and believes that Greek airspace must be equal to the territorial waters and not more than six miles. This assertion is not only a matter of a simple dispute since Turkey sent its aircraft within six miles of Greece, which responded with the interception of the aircraft that violated its airspace. The violations of Greece's airspace have continued since 1974. After 2002, the violations increased and Turkey's aircraft were flying with armed weapons.<sup>145</sup> Fights among the aircrafts are a potential source of a greater conflict between the two countries. On the other hand, Greece's response to Turkish claims is that Greece can have territorial waters of twelve miles, and thus, an airspace extended the same distance as well. Therefore, it can have an airspace of 10 mile distance since its legal prerogative is up to twelve miles. Additionally, Greece emphasizes that the status quo has been established by treaties and conventions since the 1930's. Finally, it states that Turkey began its challenges in the early 1970s', almost simultaneously with the invasion of Cyprus.

Along with the above dispute, Turkey wanted a bilateral discussion with Greece to resolve all undetermined issues and gray zones in the Aegean Sea. Greece, on the other hand, asserts that the only dispute concerns the continental shelf, and must be resolved by the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice at Hague. Turkey has continuously denied the resolution of the dispute via the International Court of Justice, preferring bilateral negotiations where it feels it would be more successful in asserting its positions.<sup>146</sup>

#### **D. MILITARIZATION OF THE ISLANDS**

Another important issue regarding bilateral relations is the militarization of the Eastern Aegean and Dodecanese islands. Turkey insists that Greece, with the militarization of the Islands, violates the Treaty of Paris in 1947. Greece, on the other hand, asserts that the militarization of the Islands of the Eastern Aegean falls into three

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<sup>145</sup> Costas Melakopides, "Turkish Political Culture and the Future of the Greco-Turkish Rapprochement," p. 3.

<sup>146</sup> See <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/ad/ade/adeb/>, accessed 10 February 2004.

different categories.<sup>147</sup> The first includes the islands of Limnos and Samothrake. The right of militarization of these two islands was established by the Treaty of Montreux of 1936, and has been recognized by Turkey as Greece asserts. The second category includes the islands of Lesbos, Chios, Samos and Ikaria. The Treaty of Lausanne determines their military status, which imposed partial demilitarization and not complete demilitarization of the islands. Thus, the presence of military forces was foreseen, and Greece maintains some forces there to protect its borders. The protection of the borders is also the reason for maintaining a number of National Guard units in the Dodecanese. In order to enhance its argument, Greece states that article 51 of the United Nations Charter foresees that every country has the right of legitimate defense of its territory. Greece also says that the application of the above article is justified in its case since Turkey created the 4<sup>th</sup> Army Group of the Aegean, which is located exactly opposite the Greek islands, and is equipped with the largest fleet of landing-craft in the Mediterranean.<sup>148</sup> Greece also reiterated Turkey's invasion of Cyprus, and the consistent Turkish claims concerning the territorial integrity of the Greek islands as supporting elements for its argument. Finally, Greece uses Article 103 of the U.N. Charter, which states that the right of legitimate defense contained in Article 51 overrides any conventional obligation to the contrary.

The status of the islands has been a controversial issue for relations between the countries. In 2000, for example, Greece withdrew from NATO exercises in the Aegean Sea when the plan refused to include Lemnos and Ikaria. Although both countries have taken important steps towards their rapprochement, and have announced their commitment to the continuation of the improvement of relations, when it is then necessary to decide on such important issues, their commitment vanishes.

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<sup>147</sup> For in depth details of Greece's position see: [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/europe\\_southeastern/turkey/turkeys\\_claims\\_greece\\_positions\\_aegean.html](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/europe_southeastern/turkey/turkeys_claims_greece_positions_aegean.html), accessed 12 March 2004.

<sup>148</sup> According to the former Greek Defense Minister Varvitsiotis, contrary to Turkish claims, the Turkish 4<sup>th</sup> Army is operational and its exercise activities are focused on joint landing operations. These exercises are directed against well selected Turkish beaches simulating the actual operational Greek islands beaches; see Ioannis M. Varvitsiotis, "The Turkish Threat," in *Security in Southeastern Europe and the U.S.-Greek Relationships*, Robert Pfaltzgraff and Dimitris Keridis eds., (McLean, Virginia: Brassey's, Inc. 1997), pp. 118-119.

However, the EU commitment demands that the two countries resolve their disputes. The EU will review the situation by the end of 2004. In case both countries have failed to resolve their issues, the EU will end their differences in the Hague court.

## **E. CYPRUS ISSUE**

### **1. The Island Invasion**

The Cyprus issue is one of the biggest problems for relations between Greece and Turkey. Actually, a total settlement of Greek-Turkish differences cannot be achieved without a mutually acceptable solution to the Cyprus problem. Cyprus was under British rule until the 1950's. The Turkish government began to worry about the fate of the Turkish Cypriots when the British were thinking about abandoning control over the island. Turkish concerns came from the fear that Greek Cypriots would demand a union with Greece, and this could threaten the rights of the Turkish Cypriots. Thus, Turkey agreed to an independent state where both sides could have equal rights. The creation of an independent state prevented the union with Greece and Turkey, and Britain and Greece were also declared the guarantors of Cyprus independence under the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee.

The treaty provided legal space for Turkish influence concerning political aspects on Cyprus, and gave it the right to intervene unilaterally or along with the other guarantor powers to prevent any violation of Cyprus' legal agreements and constitution. In 1964, President Makarios sought to amend the constitution. The amendments would entail that the Turkish community would become a minority instead of being equal with the Greek Cypriot community. Turkey considered this unacceptable.<sup>149</sup>

The intension was to intervene in Cyprus, but the United States and its President Lyndon Johnson deterred this intervention.<sup>150</sup> The U.S. president told the Turkish Prime Minister, Ismet Inonu, that in the case of intervention, the United States would not support Turkey with aid if the Soviet Union moved against Turkey in retaliation for the intervention.

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<sup>149</sup> F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," p. 78.

<sup>150</sup> See David W. Lesch, "The Middle East and the United States. A Historical and Political Reassessment," p. 430.

Lyndon Johnson's letter was leaked to the Turkish. Relations between Turkey and the United States deteriorated but it also created anti-American sentiments in Greece. Finally, Turkey's intervention occurred ten years later in 1974. The cause was an attempt by the military junta in Greece to overthrow Makarios and install Samson as President.<sup>151</sup>

The Turkish Prime Minister at that time, Bülent Ecevit, asked the British government to intervene as a guarantor of the 1960 Treaty. When Britain refused, Turkey decided to invade Cyprus alone. The invasion led to the expatriation of 200,000 Greek Cypriots and to the occupation of 38% of the island's land. Since then, Turkey has maintained a military presence in the area consisting of 35,000 soldiers while the island has been divided in two areas. The invasion deteriorated the relations between Turkey and the United States, and the United States and Greece.<sup>152</sup>

Nine years after the intervention in 1983, the Turkish Cypriots asserted their autonomy declaring an independent state with the TRNC and Rauf Denktas as its president. Turkey is currently the only country that recognizes the illegal state. The Turkish Cypriots rely upon subsidies from Turkey in order to survive since this side of Cyprus is economically isolated. Turkey, on the other hand, states that the Cyprus case is one of the significant security concerns and of great strategic importance. They thus believe that the economical burden was worth it.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Andrew Wilson, "The Aegean Dispute" *The International Institute of Strategic Studies Winter 1979/80*, pp. 17-19.

<sup>152</sup> See David W. Lesch, "The Middle East and the United States. A Historical and Political Reassessment," p. 430. As a result of the invasion, the U.S. Congress imposed an armed embargo on Turkey. Turkey responded with the closure of all U.S. bases except those of a specific NATO mission.

<sup>153</sup> F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," pp. 78-79.

Since the late 1990's, Turkey appeared to make a stronger commitment to Turkish Cyprus and moved to create an economical and financial union with Turkey. It appears also to prefer a two state solution instead of the long supported bi-zonal and bi-communal federation.<sup>154</sup> The situation remains unchanged, and it is a strong impediment to their relations.<sup>155</sup>

However, the Luxemburg summit decided to begin negotiations with Cyprus for the states that would “contribute positively to the search for a political solution to the Cyprus problem through the talks under the aegis of the United Nations which must continue with a view to creating a bi-community, bi-zonal federation.”<sup>156</sup> Thus, Turkey's position for a two state position is in opposition to the EU directives for a solution to the Cyprus issue. Moreover, the Helsinki summit accepted Turkey's candidacy. However, Turkey must now comply with the accession criteria. One, of course, was the settlement of the Cyprus issue.

## **2. The Solution's Efforts**

An effort was made to resolve this problem under the directives of the EU. Thus, the UN Security Council Resolution 1250 of 29 June 1999 invited the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders to engage in direct negotiations. On 3 December 1999, a round of “proximity talks” began in order to prepare the groundwork for future direct negotiations on the Cyprus problem. At its meeting on 10 and 11 December 1999 in Helsinki, the European Council welcomed the initiation of the talks and expressed its strong support for the UN Secretary-General's efforts.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>155</sup> Theodore Couloumbis – Constantine Lyberopoulos “The Troubled Triangle: Cyprus Greece Turkey” as the authors asserts that as long as the Turkish armed forces continue to occupy the 36 percent of the island, a solution to the problem will be all the more difficult and a settlement of the differences between Turkey and Greece could be impossible.

<sup>156</sup> See Luxembourg European Council Par. 28 Press Release: Luxembourg (12 December 1997)- Press:0 Nr: SN400/97.

<sup>157</sup> See Presidency Conclusions Helsinki European Council, 10 and 11 December 1999.

The proximity talks continued without any substantive results. In 2000, the Turkish troops made a small advance at one point in the buffer zone where a village with four Greek Cypriot families is located, raising protests from both the Greeks and the UN Secretary-General.<sup>158</sup>

In 2001, the Regular Report on Turkey's progress stated that the Turkish representatives at the Association Council with Turkey in June 2001 expressed their support for the Secretary General's efforts for a Cypriot political solution. However, EU representatives indicated their disappointment that these expressions of support have not been followed by concrete actions to facilitate this solution.<sup>159</sup> In particular, the disappointment derived from Turkey's support for Mr. Denktash's decision to withdraw from the proximity talks under UN auspices and to refuse the Secretary-General's invitation to talks in New York in September 2001.

The EU once again invited Turkey to support a solution without additional preconditions in order to facilitate the chance of achieving a settlement before the conclusion of the accession negotiations with Cyprus. The argument was that the above achievement could enable the Turkish Cypriots side to participate in the negotiations, and thus provide their perspectives.<sup>160</sup>

Turkey, strongly encouraged by the EU, has continued to express support for direct talks between the leaders of the two sides in Cyprus. The United Nations Security Council also stated that the Greek and Turkish parts must conclude a common settlement before the end of accession negotiations. On 16 January 16 2002, the leader of the Greece Cypriots, Glafkos Klerides, and the leader of the Turkish Cypriots, Rauf Denktash, started talks with the purpose of achieving an agreement by the summer of 2002.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> See 2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession, 8 November 2000.

<sup>159</sup> Data for the reforms in 2001 are derived from the Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 11 November 2001 SEC (2001) 1756, "2001 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession."

<sup>160</sup> See the Seville European Council, 21 and 22 June 2002, Presidency Conclusions, par 24.

<sup>161</sup> See Commission of the European Communities Brussels, 9 October 2002, Sec (2002) 1412, "2002 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession."

The above effort failed and the presidency conclusion in Copenhagen, 12 and 13 December 2002 actually set a new timetable, which welcomed the commitment of the Greece and Turkish Cypriots to reach a settlement by 28 February 2003 based on the UNSC's proposals.<sup>162</sup>

However, the presidency conclusions in Brussels on 20 and 21 March 2003 states that the efforts of the United Nations Secretary General to provide a settlement in Cyprus have failed.<sup>163</sup> It appeared that the Turkish government has, on many occasions, supported the continuation of negotiation for an agreed solution. Since the talks under UN auspices in The Hague failed, Turkey finally expressed the desire to reach a settlement before May 2004.<sup>164</sup>

The European Council in Thessaloniki on 19-20 June 2003 urged both the Greek and Cypriot leadership to support the UN Secretary General's efforts strongly and called them to resume the talks based on his proposals.<sup>165</sup>

However, on 8 August, Turkey signed a framework agreement aiming to establish a customs union with the northern part of Cyprus.<sup>166</sup> Since this action was against international law, it could threaten Turkey's membership prospects and also work against Turkey's commitments in its customs union with the EC. As a result, the Turkish government stated that the agreement would not be ratified.

Efforts to resolve the Cyprus problem continued with the strong support of the EU, which seems confident of a viable solution. The last presidency conclusions in Brussels state that

The European Council emphasizes its continuing strong support for the efforts of UN Secretary General Annan to help the parties seize this historic opportunity to bring about a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem consistent with the relevant UN Security Council

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<sup>162</sup> See Council of the European Union Brussels, 29 January 2003, 15917/02 Subject: Copenhagen European Council, 12 and 13 December 2002, Presidency Conclusions, Par 10.

<sup>163</sup> See Council of the European Union Brussels, 5 May 2003, 8410/03 Subject: Brussels European Council 20 and 21 March, Presidency Conclusions, Par 85.

<sup>164</sup> See 2003 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress towards Accession

<sup>165</sup> See Council of the European Union Brussels, 1 October 2003, 11638/03 Subject: Thessaloniki European Council 19 and 20 June 2003, Presidency Conclusions, Par 39.

<sup>166</sup> See 2003 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress towards Accession.

Resolutions. The European Council remains convinced that a just, viable and functional settlement is achievable by 1 May. It urges all parties to maintain a firm commitment to a successful outcome to the negotiating process with the collaboration of the governments of Greece and Turkey<sup>167</sup>.

However, the result was not accordingly optimistic and finally was declared by public referendum in 24 April 2004. The European Council also expressed its desire for the accession of a united Cyprus. Additionally, it stated that the settlement would be according to the principles of the European Union.<sup>168</sup>

At least on the part of the Greeks, during the effort to seek a resolution, it appears that Turkey continues to be wavering in its commitment to support the settlement of the Cyprus problem. Thus, the former Greek Prime Minister Kostas Simitis, sent a message to Turkey to stop supporting the Rauf Denktash's intransigency. The Prime Minister also stated that EU accession could not be implemented unless the Cyprus issue has been resolved, and that Ankara controls the political situation in Northern Cyprus and determines the moves of the Turkish Cypriots.<sup>169</sup>

After a round of negotiations in the United States, and finally in Switzerland, modifications to the Anan plan were disappointing. Actually, it proved impossible to have an agreement over the final modification of the Anan plan by both sides. Only Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots said they would accept it, while Greece and the Greek Cypriots appeared to be in doubt. Thus, the decision was to submit the settlement plan for the island to popular referenda.<sup>170</sup>

The official Greek stance appeared to lean towards support of the plan and urged the Greek Cypriots to accept it. However, Greece also stated that the Greek Cypriots

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<sup>167</sup> See Presidency Conclusions. Brussels European Council, 26 and 26 March 2004, Par 49.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., Par 50.

<sup>169</sup> See "Message on Cyprus to Ankara By Simitis," Athens, 19 January 2004 (16:29 UTC +2) Daily News.

<sup>170</sup> See the official European Unions site under the title "Now It's Up to the People of Cyprus!" [http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/docs/newsletter/latest\\_weekly\\_nl.htm#A](http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/docs/newsletter/latest_weekly_nl.htm#A). Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy stated that "These referenda will offer the occasion to write a new page in the history of an island too long divided. The future now lies in the hands of the people of Cyprus themselves and of their leaders". He also congratulated Annan and his Special Envoy, Alvaro de Soto, for "the formidable work they have performed." However, the plan was never implemented since the Greek Cypriots rejected it.

would undertake the final decision, and that regardless of the decision, Greece would render its support. Officially, Turkey seemed to take the same stance on supporting the Anan plan. Additionally, the Turks Cypriots appeared to support the plan strongly, although its leader, Rauf Denktas, was against the plan.

The current Cyprus leadership was also against the plan, which called on the people to reject the plan.<sup>171</sup> The result of the voting on 24 of April was according to the estimates, and the plan was rejected since the Greek Cypriots voted overwhelming against it.<sup>172</sup>

Cyprus finally became part of the Union on 1 May 2004, without a resolution to the division of the island. Based on all the procedures, Turkey appears to have won since it had fully supported the plan, although, in the end, it was not accepted. Therefore, Turkey met one of the requirements to help resolve or seek a settlement to the Cyprus issue, although it appeared to act without clear direction from the beginning of the negotiations. Moreover, the Cyprus situation has remained as it was until now. The negative answer from the Greeks also resulted in a more cooperative stance towards the Turkish Cypriots by the EU.<sup>173</sup>

#### **F. GREECE STANCE**

The Greeks were successful because Cyprus was invited to join the EU even without a settlement. Thus, the Greek Cypriots appear not to have any real reason to make concessions. The plan was a result of what was considered to be a great compromise on 6 March 1995 in Brussels. The Greeks endorsed Turkey's Customs

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<sup>171</sup> Cyprus President Tassos Papadopoulos, see "Kathimerini" Daily Newspaper of 8 April 2004, p. A4.

<sup>172</sup> See ANA (Athens News Agency) 26 April 2004, "Final Results of Cyprus Referenda." The results showed that 64.91% of the Turkish Cypriots voted 'yes', while 35.01% voted 'no' for the Anan plan. The results of the Greek Cypriots were almost the opposite since only 24.17% voted 'yes' for the plan while 75.83% voted against the plan.

<sup>173</sup> See ANA (Athens News Agency) 27 April 2004, "EU Commissioner Says Outcome of Cyprus Referenda 'Not End of the Road.'" European Union enlargement Commissioner Guenter Verheugen speaking at a press conference in Luxembourg "stressed the European Commission's political will to undertake initiatives for the economic support of the Turkish Cypriot community and added that proposals made in this respect by the Cypriot delegation were constructive." Additionally, "[he].. underlined that the European Commission desires backing for the Turkish Cypriots who, as he said, must not be punished."

Union with the EU and withdrew its veto for a substantial financial protocol providing aid to Turkey, and in exchange, the EU made a commitment to set the date for negotiation with Cyprus.<sup>174</sup>

Thus, the Cyprus problem became a EU problem and Greece tried to be successful by using political means to obtain what was lost in battle and unable to regain through bilateral negotiations. Greece was confident that the accession of Cyprus “..could provide the catalyst for a just and viable solution along the lines defined by the U.N. Security Council.”<sup>175</sup>

Actually, Greece changed its approach towards Turkey in the late 1990's from a radical and strong stance in the previous era to a smoother and cooperative approach. The policy was characterized by the utilization of international institutions and actions according to the principles of international law, international ethics and mutual support from like-minded international actors. Priority was given to strengthening the economy while foreign relations chose a diplomatic approach and a rational strategy of deterrence. Support for this substantive turn resulted from the successful Europeanization of the Cyprus issue as described by the 1995 compromise. Political elites of the country also felt the new stance to be very promising and rewarding, and thus, they lent their support to the consistent rapprochement efforts with Ankara.<sup>176</sup>

### **1. The Greece-Turkey Rapprochement**

As a result of Greece's new stance and the Turkish efforts for meeting the EU criteria, relations between Turkey and Greece have continued to improve. In 2001, by both Ankara and Athens adopted a number of confidence measures with the help of the Foreign Ministers of both countries.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Costas Melakopides, “Turkish Political Culture and the Future of the Greco-Turkish Rapprochement,” p. 20.

<sup>175</sup> From a speech by the late Alternate Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, Dr. Yannis Kranidiotis. Speech delivered at the Conference on “The Enlargement of the European Union,” organized by The Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) and the Embassy of Austria in Greece, 6-7 November 1998, Athens. See [http://www.eliamep.gr/admin/upload\\_publication/175\\_1en\\_occ.PDF](http://www.eliamep.gr/admin/upload_publication/175_1en_occ.PDF), accessed 2 March 2004.

<sup>176</sup> For a detailed description of the stance of Greece, which the author names “Simitis Doctrine” see Costas Melakopides “Turkish Political Culture and the Future of the Greco-Turkish Rapprochement,” pp. 4-6.

<sup>177</sup> The Commission of the European Communities Brussels, 11 November 2001 Sec (2001) 1756, “2001 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession.”

The two Foreign Ministers opened a direct telephone line and inform each other of their military exercises, thus, in essence, cultivating a cooperative approach. In June 2001, they also decided on an additional set of measures for confidence building. These positive developments could enhance the possibility for a peaceful settlement of disputes between the two countries, in accordance with the Helsinki European Council conclusions and the Accession Partnership with Turkey as the EU estimated in its 2001 report.<sup>178</sup>

In April 2001, Greece also changed its military doctrine and ended the state of war mobilization with Turkey, which had been imposed since the 1974 invasion of Cyprus. Athens also announced a plan to reduce its armed expenditures along with reducing its armed forces from 140,000 to 80,000-90,000 men.<sup>179</sup> Turkey also responded to this gesture by postponing defense planning measures.<sup>180</sup> Even if the primary reason for the above reduction was economical, the measure helped create a better climate between the two countries.

These good relations also continued in 2002, mainly as a result of the efforts of the two Foreign Ministers. The new AKP government, which won the November 2002 elections declared in July that it will continue this effort for better relations between the two countries. Thus, the two sides endorsed ten bilateral co-operation agreements on subjects related to the environment and economic development. Additionally, they signed five co-operation agreements for culture and emergency relief. In 13 February 2002, a Turkish-Greek Joint Economic Commission met for the first time in Athens, and signed a protocol for cooperation in areas ranging from energy, industry, agriculture, transport, and customs.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> See 25 March 2001, *Turkish Daily News* [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/03\\_25\\_01/for.htm](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/03_25_01/for.htm), accessed 10 March 2004.

<sup>180</sup> See [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/04\\_12\\_01/for.htm](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/04_12_01/for.htm). The TSK say they would seriously cut military spending after the economic crisis. "Turkish General Staff says they had postponed 32 projects costing \$19.5 billion in an effort to ease economic woes. The TSK's decision to delay these plans came at a time when the Greek government has decided to postpone the purchase of 60 Typhoon fighter jets from the Eurofighter consortium. These cuts have been made keeping in mind all of Turkey's security considerations, the statement said,"

<sup>181</sup> Data for progress in Greece Turkish relations from the Commission of the European Communities Brussels, 10 September 2002 Sec (2002) 1412, "2002 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession."

Moreover, the two countries agreed to the readmission of illegal migrants. This was a hotly debated issue mainly for Greece, which has received many immigrants during the past few years. The building of confidence measures has continued to provide agreements for the cancellation of military exercises in the Aegean Sea and contacts between the intelligence agencies of both countries. The two countries also started exploratory contacts in March about the Aegean Sea under the initiative of both Foreign Ministers. As a demonstration of the new era in the relations between the two countries, a joint ceremony for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NATO in Brussels was organized. A cornerstone for their Economic co-operation happened in March 2002, when they also agreed on a €300 million project to build a natural gas pipeline, providing natural gas from the Caspian Sea area to Greece.<sup>182</sup>

Relations between Turkey and Greece continue to improve and the governments of both countries pledge to continue rapprochement. Progress has also been made on the signing of bilateral agreements between Greece and Turkey. The countries also continued the explanatory talks on the Aegean issue through several meetings with the Continental Shelf as the main topic. On 26 May 2003, the two Foreign Ministers Gül and Papandreou agreed to an exchange between military academies and military hospitals. Additionally, they agreed to exchange personnel between the Partnership for Peace training centers of both countries in July.<sup>183</sup>

Both countries also have mutually decided to cancel the autumn 2003 military exercises and signed the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel mines and the Olympic truce.<sup>184</sup> Additionally, in February 2003, taking measures towards further economic

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<sup>182</sup> See 29 March 2002, *Turkish Daily News*, Turkey and Greece Sign Gas Pipeline Protocol [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/03\\_29\\_02/for.htm#f8](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/03_29_02/for.htm#f8), accessed 28 February 2004.

<sup>183</sup> Data from the 2003 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress towards Accession.

<sup>184</sup> Signed by the Foreign Ministers Papandreou and Gül in Athens in October 21, 2003; see "The Turkish Foreign Minister Signed the Olympic Truce Declaration," *Macedonian Press Agency*, October 21, 2003 available online [http://www.mpa.gr/article.html?doc\\_id=409934](http://www.mpa.gr/article.html?doc_id=409934), accessed March 30, 2004. Decision on mines were taken earlier. See News, 16 March 2002, [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/03\\_16\\_02/for.htm#f6](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/03_16_02/for.htm#f6), accessed 10 March 2004 entitled: Turkey Decides to Accept to the Ottawa Convention on Land Mines.

cooperation, both countries signed an agreement for the supply of natural gas from Turkey to Greece and an agreement on double taxation with important economic expectations.<sup>185</sup>

In this vein, Greece's former Foreign Minister recently sent a proposal to his counterpart in Turkey for a gradual matching reduction in defense spending of the two countries. Although the Turkish Foreign Minister did not commit to signing a proposed agreement, he founded it very positive.<sup>186</sup>

The change in strategy towards Turkey is believed by the country to be producing results. Peaceful relations with Turkey, the accession of Cyprus to the EU and the solution of the political problems "has steadily characterized and strengthened the role and credibility of the country on the European Union and the international stage."<sup>187</sup>

It appears that Athens relates the accession of Turkey to a peaceful settlement of their differences. As such, Athens seems to utterly support Turkey's EU aspirations. This support was publicly declared in Greece. Nonetheless, some voices are speaking out against the prospect of Turkish membership, such as Athens Archbishop Christodoulos, head of the Orthodox Church of Greece in his negative expression of Turkey's ambitions to join the European Union.<sup>188</sup> However, even in such cases, the government restored the situation and declared support for Turkey's efforts.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> See [http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign\\_policy/europe\\_southeastern/turkey/bilateral.html](http://www.mfa.gr/english/foreign_policy/europe_southeastern/turkey/bilateral.html), accessed 15 March 2004.

<sup>186</sup> ANA 20 January 2004 22:05:44, "Gul Reiterates Papandreou's Defense Spending Reduction P-proposal is Positive."

<sup>187</sup> Former Greek Foreign Minister G. A. Papandreou in the January edition of "KRAMA" magazine entitled "The Greek Advantage in he Balkans- Our Ankara Policy."

<sup>188</sup> Although the statement was out of his jurisdiction, Athens Archbishop Christodoulos enjoys great support from the people in Greece.

<sup>189</sup> See ANA (Athens News Agency) 06 December, 2003, Gov't on Turkey's EU Prospects after Archbishop's Tirade Replying to the Archbishop." Former Government spokesman Christos Protopapas stressed that the exercise of foreign policy was the exclusive prerogative of the government, which considered that supporting Turkey's European prospects would be beneficial to Greece."

Former Foreign Minister George Papandreou also stressed that "the European Union was the "answer" to the continent's history of conflict and bloodshed, which came to open new and peaceful roads". He used the example of the French and Germans, who can cooperate today although they were enemies in the past. He also added that "The more people can become members of the European family because they adopt these principles, the better it is for us. Greece has painfully experienced the mistakes of the past. Let us move forward by learning from them, not repeating them".

Thus, the governmental position fully supports Turkey's ambitions for the EU, and more importantly, this position remained stable throughout the political spectrum. The new government in Greece after the March 2004 elections is also supportive of Turkey's European aspirations.<sup>190</sup>

The argument next might concern the processes of integration. A Turkey in line with European standards will concentrate more on domestic and economic issues. This is a rather Kantian approach<sup>191</sup> to the Greek stance that possibly believes that such a Turkey will have a democratic governorship and threats from political ambitions of other elites, including the military based on the cultivation of ethnicism ideas and the promotion of hatred, will cease to exist. Thus, Greece appears close to the Turkish effort for the European project, and both main political parties express this opinion, as is apparent after the recent elections.

## **2. The Path Ahead**

From the above analysis, it seems that Turkey's Greek relations have improved. Turkey has taken strong steps towards integration. However, even if the situation appears to be a friendly, it is not possible to absolutely state that this situation can continue forever. Two sets of evidence bring this to light.

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<sup>190</sup> See ANA (Athens News Agency) "Greece Desires Turkey's European Prospect, Spokesman says" 29 April 2004. "The Greek Government Desires Turkey's European Prospect, government spokesman Theodoros Roussopoulos said Wednesday, responding to questions during a regular press briefing on Athens' stance regarding the neighboring country's future vis-à-vis the EU." Can be found also at <http://www.greekembassy.org/Embassy/content/en/Article.aspx?office=3&folder=591&article=13401>, accessed 5 May 2004.

See also ANA (Athens News Agency) Greek FM: Athens Continues to Back Turkey's EU Prospects, 06 May, 2004 Greek Foreign Minister Petros Molyviatis " reiterated Athens' decision to maintain its support for neighboring Turkey's European orientation" and "[he]... said it would be a mistake for Athens to try and block Turkey's European prospects" Can be found also at <http://www.greekembassy.org/Embassy/content/en/Article.aspx?office=3&folder=223&article=13439>, accessed 7 May 2004.

See also <http://www.turkishdailynews.com/ErTDN/latest/for.htm#f4>, Greece's Prime Minister K. Karamanlis said "I confirm the support of the Greek government and me personally as to Turkey's course towards Europe and Mr. Erdogan's reform program," accessed 10 May 2004.

<sup>191</sup> Kant believed that Government people do not cause wars. Democracy is the highest expression of the will of the people. Therefore, democracies are considered more pacific than the other political systems. Thus, the expansion of democracies could lead to the elimination of war. See I. Kant "On Eternal Peace". Might the Greek approach relate to the restoration of democracy to Turkey with the elimination of the disputes?

First, no real concessions occurred between the two countries. Although their relation seems to be good, they seem to cooperate on many aspects in their policies, and such cooperation falls short of the great expectations. Whatever has been currently done is of small importance, and is concerned with issues that do not consider controversial. The reduction of arm defense, for example, is small in scale, also results from economic reasons,<sup>192</sup> and is not something that will really set the basis for a new cooperative stance between the two countries. Important issues which are highly controversial, such as the Aegean Sea, continue until now to not be part of the agenda. One reason may be that lack of a common point on these issues. Moreover, since no progress has been made on the above aspects until recently, and because a time limit for the countries to resolve their differences exists, which is the end of the 2004, it is unlikely that a solution will be reached by then. It is very difficult to make the strong decisions needed at this time since they could prove to be politically damaging to the leaders.<sup>193</sup> The situation might be better in Greece where the political elites hold real power as opposed to Turkey, where security concerns continue the military's political power and nationalist instincts.<sup>194</sup> Therefore, the resolution of the dispute of the Aegean Sea will be unlikely in 2004. Whether Turkey's possibility for membership will consequently be affected by this outcome remains to be seen.

Since the agreement between the two seems impossible until the end of 2004, the issue will likely be resolved via the jurisdiction by the Hague Court. In this case, both countries have to accept the solution regardless of its outcome. However, as seen with the resolution of the dispute via the Hague Court, Greece's position from the beginning of

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<sup>192</sup> Turkey faced a serious economic crisis in 2001 and a more severe one in 2002. Greece, on the other hand, had to comply with the economic implications of the Monetary Union.

<sup>193</sup> See Paul B. Henze "Turkey: Towards the Twenty-First Century, A Rand Note. The author says that every concession in Cyprus could harm the politician and thus "It is unwise for any Turkish or Greek politician to accede to or advocate permanent settlement on Cyprus that domestic rivals can use against him" p. 14. The same notion could easily apply to the Aegean issue since it is a long-standing dispute between the two countries and of equal, or greater, importance.

<sup>194</sup> In his TESTIMONY (RAND) written in June 2001, Ian O. Lesser assessed that "The more significant force on the Turkey scene today is arguably the Turkish nationalism- and the behaviour of Turkey's nationalist party (MHP) is one of the large open questions for future." The MHP remained outside of the parliament during the last elections (November 3 2002) but is an important force in Turkey and opposed to any concession on Cyprus and the Aegean issue. The most important, however, in Turkey's circumstances is the stance of the military towards its security concerns. See Ian O. Lesser, "Turkey, Greece, and the U.S. in a Changing Strategic Environment: Testimony Before the House International Relations Committee, Subcommittee on Europe," p. 3.

the dispute was known, while Turkey preferred the bilateral agreements. Therefore, it seems that Greece expects to gain more from using international law when it feels that Turkey will have to retract its illegal assertions. If this is the case, then Turkey has to accept another compromise in its long-standing position. The point is that such a compromise has to do with its vital, or in some cases, security interests.

This could be a strong test for Turkey, and the result will be likely to be a product of a combination of other factors. These will concern who decides what is in the best interests of the country, and as an extension, what security means and how it is threatened by the important decisions that Turkey must make.<sup>195</sup> Additionally, what is the level of nationalism, how and if it was cultivated and by whom, and how could this become a strong internal factor that could lead to the rejection of whatever compromise.

Thus, Turkey's stance on the resolution of the dispute will not be an easy task. Nonetheless, it is not possible to know for which side the final decision of the Court will lean. Cyprus, for example, was expected to create concerns in Turkey but, in the end, it was the Greeks who rejected the plan.

A second important reason is that whatever approach that has been undertaken between the two, has mainly been done on the part of Greece.<sup>196</sup> The argument goes that Turkey must show a reciprocal stance and move towards some concessions. Failing to do so might create impediments to Greek politicians to move forward, and might give rise to the exploitation of nationalist instincts since Greece appears to be the weak link and the part that it provides without reciprocation. Turkey has not yet extended such a gesture.<sup>197</sup> Additionally, no agreement has been reached about the hotly debated topics of the

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<sup>195</sup> See also Chapter III.

<sup>196</sup> Opinion supported by F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty," p. 87.

<sup>197</sup> This note added later. During his visit to Greece and Turkey in May 2004, the Prime Minister promised that Turkey would reopen the theological seminary on the island of Halki. Although this is not the subject that will decrease the differences between the countries, it is an important and shows that the two countries are closer than ever to a cooperative and mutual resolution. It is also important since it is the first gesture of Turkey since the changed stance of Greece. See Last update 09 May 2004 18:30 <http://www.in.gr/news/article.asp?lngEntityID=536428&lngDtrID=244>, accessed 9 May 2004.

Aegean Sea as declared recently by the former Greek Foreign Minister.<sup>198</sup> Moreover the accession of Cyprus happened without a resolution to the Cyprus issue. Cyprus might have not realized the aspirations of a unite Cyprus but now has a ‘voice’ (vote) to the European foreign policy.

Nonetheless, Greece seems to continue its friendly stance, and Athens appears to associate the accession of Turkey to a peaceful settlement of their differences. Not only does Athens seems to support Turkey’s European project, but it seems that it will support Turkey in setting the date of the negotiations as stated by the deputy Foreign Minister in Greece.<sup>199</sup> As such, Athens will not be an impediment to Turkey’s EU aspirations. Therefore, Greece might appear close to Turkey’s effort for the European project, and both main political parties agree upon this opinion, as evident after the recent elections. Turkey, on the other hand, feels confident that the EU will set the date for starting accession negotiations this December. Turkey is also threatening that if the EU acts differently, then Turkey will have to choose a different orientation and has the option to do so.<sup>200</sup>

## **G. FINAL CONCLUSION**

Overall, Turkey has made a great deal of progress. Turkey has made many efforts towards EU membership, and it is unlikely that such efforts will halt since they would signal the failure of the Europeanization project. Inside this framework, Turkey’s Greece rapprochement will likely continue. An important test for integration is the Cyprus issue, which seems to have turned out the best for Turkey. Greece, on the other hand, shows a cooperative approach and efforts to resolve the problem via diplomatic channels. Greece

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<sup>198</sup> See ANA (Athens News Agency) 17 December 2003 entitled: FM Papandreou: No Results Yet from Greek-Turkish Talks. Foreign Minister George Papandreou said that there are no results yet from Greek-Turkish talks. Additionally he said that “[the]... Greek side would consider the referral of Aegean continental shelf dispute to the International Court at The Hague as a satisfactory development”. Significant also is that he stated that the Turkish military continues to play “significant, substantive and maybe pivotal ... on the Cyprus issue and Greek-Turkish relations ... No one can guarantee that Turkey will escape from this past logic.”

<sup>199</sup> Interview of George Valinakis, Deputy Foreign Minister of Greece in Turkish TV channel N-TV. Mr. Valinakis said the Greek government supports the European aspirations of Turkey. He additionally said that in the absence of “abnormal” conditions, Greece will say ‘yes’ to Turkey this December (for setting a date of accession negotiations) 8 May 2004 18:36. See <http://www.in.gr/news/article.asp?lngEntityID=536371&lngDtrID=244>, accessed 8 May 2004.

<sup>200</sup> See Article 30 April 2004 23:29, Tayip Erdogan Declares that the EU Will Make the Right Decision (regarding opening accession negotiations) <http://www.in.gr/news/article.asp?lngEntityID=534608> Tayip also said that Turkey has alternate solutions.

seems to relate the differences between the countries to the domestic organizational structure and problematic democratic institutions and governorship of Turkey. Consequently, Greece might believe that integration could solve many of the problems since integration means that Turkey would have aligned with the European standard. However, this implies that Greece relates the accession to a better understanding or a suitable solution to the long-standing dispute. Such a solution will be expected to be of definite interest to Greece or according to the law, since Greece believes that in many cases, Turkey violates international law. As stated previously, however, thus far, Greece has not been awarded for its friendly position and its consessional help towards Turkey's accession.

An important aspect is that Cyprus became a member without a political solution to the problem. Cyprus, on the other hand, since it is a member, can vote on EU policy, and could now block relative decisions if it feels that the problems continue to exist. Cyprus also has distanced itself from Greece, as was seen by the decision taken on the Anan plan which Cyprus rejected, although the official Greek stance was to support the plan. Cyprus is expected to cooperate with Turkey on a future solution to its problem. Its stance towards Turkey's aspirations remains to be seen. Nonetheless, Cyprus is no longer a political "prerequisite" for Turkey, since Turkey appeared to support the Anan plan and tried to assist in the solution. Greece, on the other hand, will continue to be a great supporter of Turkey as is evidenced by its stance thus far, and from official statements. Greece might expect to gain from Turkey's transformation, which could entail a peaceful settlement of its Eastern borders and increase in its own security.

Therefore, Greece will unlikely create impediments to Turkey's effort at least in the short term. Both countries appear to be strongly interested in Turkey's integration. Since Greece's cooperation will continue as long as Turkey appears to respond positively to the good gesture, it also seems that the result will be Turkey's responsibility. However, as stated based on the examination of the relations between the two countries as well as the recent developments concerning the strong decisions made about the hotly debated issues, which might again be highlighted as security issues, it is unlikely to occur in the short term. It will also be unlikely that Turkey will take the initiative since the political costs will be greater for its politicians. Therefore, it is possible that the final decision will

be made by the Hague Court. Thus, the dispute could prove a real impediment for opening accession negotiations with the country since it will be unlikely that the situation will be resolved by the end of 2004. The only way is again more time.

Turkey, on the other hand, appears ready and confident about the opening of negotiations at the end of the 2004 even without the resolution of the dispute.<sup>201</sup> However, this will not be so easy since it was included in the Helsinki summit document.<sup>202</sup> Moreover, it is one of the issues of the reports on Turkey's progress towards accession.<sup>203</sup> Finally, many analysts cited it as a prerequisite for opening accession negotiations<sup>204</sup> and no real improvement on hotly debated issues has occurred.

Nonetheless, a good environment exists that Turkey must exploit for its efforts. Turkey also enjoys the support of the United States<sup>205</sup>, and maybe the support of the EU as a result of the Anan plan since it was accepted by the Turkish Cypriots and rejected by the Greek Cypriots, which might imply that the plan was closer to Turkey's interests. Therefore, the prospects are even more promising.

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<sup>201</sup> In his visit here at NPS, Professor Dr. Husein BAGCI (Department of International Relations in Middle East Technical University in Ankara and specialist in Turkey-EU relations) declared that the strong supporter of Turkey for EU accession is Greece. He also appeared confident that the EU will set the date for opening accession negotiations by the end of 2004. In my question of how is he sure since the problem with Greece has not been resolved, he answered that this is not a prerequisite. However, this seems to be a prerequisite (see the next three footnotes as well). Moreover, when I asked him about the status of minority rights implying the case of the Kurds, he replied that Turkey accepts those minorities included in the Lausanne Treaty. Even if Greece, as is obvious by the later official statements, seems ready to support the opening of accession negotiations, Greece will not be the only country that will determine the final decision. Additionally, if the dispute is to be taken in account, the dispute has not yet been resolved.

<sup>202</sup> See Presidency Conclusions Helsinki European Council, 10 and 11 December 1999, par 4.

<sup>203</sup> See all the Reports for Turkey's Progress towards accession since 1999. The concept of the dispute is included in the reports under the title: "Peaceful Settlement of Border Disputes" and it writes about the dispute with Greece.

<sup>204</sup> See for example F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, "Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty." As the authors write "...EU made clear that a resolution of Turkey's differences with Greece over the Aegean and Cyprus were a precondition for membership," p. 87.

<sup>205</sup> See, for example, the statement by Grossman: US Supports Turkey's EU Target, 21 March 2002, [http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old\\_editions/03\\_21\\_02/for.htm#f4](http://www.turkishdailynews.com/old_editions/03_21_02/for.htm#f4), accessed 20 April 2004.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

The Helsinki summit accepted Turkey as a candidate member, and Turkey must comply with the political criteria. The current thesis explored the prospects for Turkey's accession considering these political criteria. The research seems to indicate that Turkey has made much progress towards integration. However, Turkey might need more time to reach the final step.

### **A. ISLAM**

Turkey's progress and direction has been ubiquitous with the prevalence of political Islam in Turkey. However, the thesis argues that no such impediment could be important to Turkey's European aspirations. Rather, political Islam in Turkey started and became stronger as a reactionary movement. The reasons for its strong presence result from the frustration of the people with the inability of the other political parties and the corruption present in Turkish politics. Other international as well as domestic factors contributed to the rise of political Islam in Turkey. Its first political attempts raised concerns since they seemed to pave a way for an Eastern orientation far removed from the Western ideological concept. However, it soon became obvious that political Islam became a supporter of the western orientation, and specifically for EU integration. This change, of course, might be a product of many factors, such as suppression by the military, since no other way existed for the party to remain on the political scene. Additionally, the country has a strong secular past. Thus, the possibility of Islamic rule such as in the case of Iran is extremely unlikely in the case of Turkey. The likely case will be a transformation of the Islamic party into more mainstream politics having as ideological concepts, the Islamic values akin to the Christian Democrats in Western societies. Thus, at least if the progress towards alignment with European standard goes well and the prospects remain stable, it is unlikely that the Islamic political resurgence will impede that process.

### **B. MILITARY**

The military, however, although it might have assisted in the Islamic transformation or the elimination of the Islamic threat that it appeared to pose for the orientation of the country, the thesis argues that it might be the most important factor and

the final determinant for the Europeanization project's outcome. Turkey thus far has undergone great progress. The Turkish government has declared repeatedly that its main objective is to meet the Copenhagen political criteria in time to allow a positive assessment by the Commission this year, and thereby, pave the way for a decision by the European Council in December 2004 to start accession negotiations with Turkey. However, this possibility remains unlikely. Turkey needs more progress in many aspects to meet the political criteria.

The military has been the determinant factor in politics since the creation of modern Turkey. The first party was created by the military leadership. Since then, the military holds significant political power. As history shows, the military even behind the scenes was always ready to intervene to restore the situation, even though according to its own estimates, this was detrimental.. Its involvement might have been desirable in some cases in the past and appeared to have the approval of Turkey's society. The military never directly holds power, except for short periods of time after every coup. In some cases, it also only intervened via recommendations which were interpreted as orders, without taking power directly. Thus, the military, although it holds power, is beyond the accusations of mismanagement since it does not hold power directly. Such accusations are levied against the political elite, who, however, do not hold real power, or at least not enough to introduce strong reforms in the country. Therefore, the political elite appeared to be the bad link of the government and completely responsible of every bad outcome. Such a political elite could use clientilistic politics while constantly under the strong eye and control of the military elite. The driving factor for the military's power relies upon the cultivation of security issues. Turkey's past lends itself to insecurity issues and thus, the prevalence of security arguments which has been cultivated so far through educational means, helped to stabilize security instincts. Such feelings create impediments to reforms and progress inline with the European standards. Therefore, a great impediment to reforms results from the case of human rights and the Kurdish issue.

### **C. HUMAN RIGHTS KURDISH**

Nonetheless, Turkey has improved its status concerning human rights. Minority rights also are in better shape than before the Helsinki decision and the creation of NPAA. However, even if progress has been made, many important aspects are still

unresolved. Moreover their resolution is unlikely to be happen, at least in the short term, under the current political conditions. Turkey's steps towards human rights are rather impressive. However, minority rights are still not up to par. Turkey has not yet signed the Convention for Minorities. Any effort made towards the resolution of these issues is very difficult because the Kurdish issue, which is apt to be considered a minority rights issue, is also felt to be a security threat for the country. As such, implementation of strong steps will be very difficult. Moreover, the military establishment determines what security means as well as the country's threats. Since the military's power derives from the threats and security issues that the country faces, its position towards the Kurds will unlikely change at time soon. Also, the military, as this thesis argues, still possesses the power to impose its position and its will on the political elite at least on such important issues. Therefore, the impediments will likely remain until a calmer political approach will prevail in the country's governorship.

#### **D. GREECE CYPRUS**

The same reasoning remains important for the Greece Turkey dispute. It is true that there is a cultivation of a better situation between the two sides. However, until now, there has been no resolution of the real dispute between the countries. Whatever concessions that might arise concerning security issues might also increase security concerns for the military or even be impossible in the face of strong nationalist instincts. Thus, Turkey's acceptance of this position that differs greatly from its long standing position towards Greece might also be unlikely at this point. Therefore, the integration must be executed at a future point in time when Turkey will enjoy a more mature posture.

The resolution of the dispute might go to the Hague court. Nonetheless, Greece is today a great supporter of Turkey's European aspirations and seems to be in favor of setting a date for accession negotiations by the end of 2004. However, the dispute remains unresolved and such an issue could impede these negotiations, since it appears to be a prerequisite for Turkey's prospects towards membership. Greece might say yes but Greece is not the only determinant factor.

## **F. OVERALL**

To summarize, note that all aspects in Turkey are interrelated. Its greatest problem might be its lack of democratic values. This lack has to do with the level of civil military relations. The status of the military then continues to be strong. Its power derives from security reasons. Other important aspects of political criteria, such as minority rights and human rights, seem to contradict the feelings of security. Also, the military has been the factor that defines security. As such an important decision on the Kurds cannot be resolved, and the same applies for Greece Turkish rapprochement, great concessions are highly unlikely. Thus, the real transformation of Turkey will result from further changes to its civil-military relations. Afterwards, the country could implement the remainder of the reforms in a calmer environment with a higher probability of success.

Even if Turkey expects the date for negotiations to be set, this thesis estimates that it will be unlikely to occur before the end of 2004. Turkey will be surprised as the data shows the assistance of Greece in these efforts, but Greece will not be the only determinant factor. The report of progress in 2004 will have a much greater impact as a determinant factor. It is unlikely that Turkey's situation will change even though much progress has been made as many important issues are still unresolved. These include political reasons, human and minority rights, and actually, the still mainly unresolved dispute with Greece, although Greece is an apparent supporter of Turkey's efforts. Moreover, the path of progress so far shows that time is not on Turkey's side to implement the remaining reforms. Civil military relations continue to determine the path and the speed of the application of new reforms. Thus, a rather negative result is expected. However, this could have negative repercussions for the country which will surely appear as a result. If this is the case, then Turkey must be informed and receive special treatment in order to avoid undesirable changes in its orientations. Although the thesis states that Turkey has made great progress, and has extended great efforts thus far to reject the European project, as Turkey claims in case of rejection, the EU must treat the country in a cooperative manner. Moreover, for the political elite, success with the European project appears to be the only way to assert their role and move towards alignment with the EU civil military relations standards. Therefore, in order for the political elite to remain strong, or at least to continue its efforts for integration, Turkey

must be treated carefully by the EU and in a manner that will calm whatever disappointment that arises in the hope for immediate accession in the near term. Even if the estimates returned by this thesis based on raw data state that it is unlikely that the date will be set for the opening of negotiations for Turkey's accession, such a possibility cannot be excluded. Actually, Turkey can achieve its goal with strong support from other countries, or if the member countries are convinced that Turkey's path thus far can guarantee the implementation of the remaining reforms. Such an outcome will be very significant considering the country's specific weight.

Turkey is important as a paradigm for it can highlight how an institution can provide incentives for the creation of a better world. Turkey has undergone a great transformation in its internal society but also internationally as well as without being forced to do so. It was a willingness resulting from its desire to be included in a strong institution. The institution, on the other hand, simply established the criteria.

Turkey's case is important for the United States. A democratic Turkey can provide the paradigm that Islam and democracy are compatible in supporting the efforts of the Bush strategy for the expansion of democracy in the Muslim world. Turkey's orientation towards the West is also very important in this effort since many Arab countries accuse the West of waging a war against Islam.<sup>206</sup> A Muslim ally in this effort is extremely important. In any case, the inclusion of Turkey in the EU will demonstrate that the West is not prejudicial in any way towards the Muslim world.

Turkey's accession is expected also to relieve the tension in south East Europe and the Aegean Sea since it provides a better environment for cooperation among neighboring countries. Moreover, accession entails the resolution of border disputes as the EU therefore demands a peaceful arrangement of issues among neighboring countries.

Thus, Turkey's efforts towards the EU should receive support. Turkey's path thus far also shows that Turkey is closer than ever to its aspirations. The importance of the aforementioned reasons necessitate that Turkey must be helped to implement the remaining reforms and enter the EU in a reasonable amount of time.

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<sup>206</sup> See David W. Lesch, "The Middle East and the United States. A Historical and Political Reassessment," p. 43.

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